

तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय

SANTINIKETAN  
VISWA BHARATI  
LIBRARY

822.3

I-E

V.6







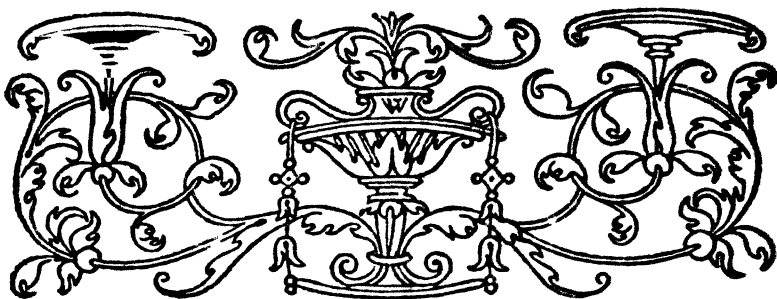
**THE IMPERIAL SHAKESPEARE**  
**IN TEN VOLUMES**  
**VOLUME VI**

*The annotations at the foot of the page are intended to explain difficult phrases or allusions. Single words, which are no longer in common use, appear only in the glossary, which is printed in last volume.*

*The numbering of the lines follows that of the Cambridge Edition, the text of which is used in this edition.*







THE IMPERIAL EDITION OF  
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF

WITH ANNOTATIONS AND A  
GENERAL INTRODUCTION BY  
SIR SIDNEY LEE

VOLUME VI

KING RICHARD II

KING JOHN

KING HENRY IV—PART I

KING HENRY IV—PART II

LONDON AND CALCUTTA  
THE STANDARD LITERATURE CO., LTD.

COPYRIGHT  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

# KING RICHARD II

WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY GEORGE SAINTSBURY  
AND AN ORIGINAL FRONTISPIECE BY PAUL WOODROFFE





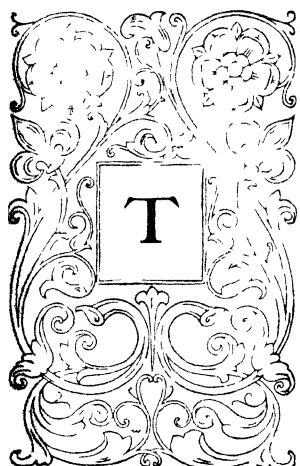
# CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION TO KING RICHARD II BY GEORGE SAINTSBURY . . . . .	ix
TEXT OF THE PLAY . . . . .	1

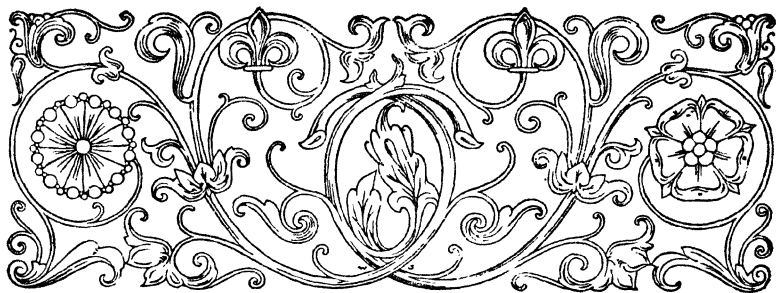




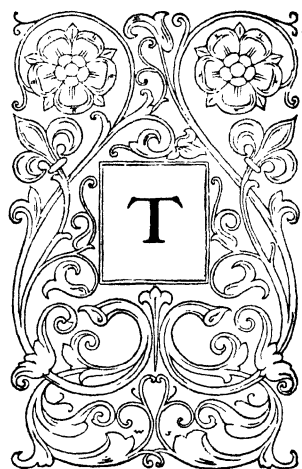
## INTRODUCTION

HE literary interest of this play, separated as it can be according to the wise ordinance of this edition from non-literary considerations, may be fairly considered from three points of view,—two of them necessary and proper, the third accidental, after a fashion, but almost appertaining to that class of accident which logicians call inseparable. Placing this between the other two, their order will be: First, the position, according to literary considerations only, of the play in Shakespeare's work; secondly, its relation to Marlowe's "Edward II"; thirdly, its intrinsic and absolute value for us. All three, as in all such cases, have to do with each other; but in this order of treatment we can subsume, and if necessary repeat, the results of the earlier examinations in the later.





## INTRODUCTION



THE literary interest of this play, separated as it can be according to the wise ordinance of this edition from non-literary considerations, may be fairly considered from three points of view, — two of them necessary and proper, the third accidental, after a fashion, but almost appertaining to that class of accident which logicians call inseparable. Placing this between the other two, their order will be: First, the position, according to literary considerations only, of the play in Shakespeare's work; secondly, its relation to Marlowe's "Edward II"; thirdly, its intrinsic and absolute value for us. All three, as in all such cases, have to do with each other; but in this order of treatment we can subsume, and if necessary repeat, the results of the earlier examinations in the later.

## KING RICHARD II

To begin with "Richard II" as a "stage" of Shakespeare. That it is an early one, external and so to speak non-literary testimony establishes, with a certainty not always at our service, in the fact of the date of the earliest quarto (1597), and the mention by Meres (1598); but without these, internal evidence — not of the fantastically minute, but of the general and convincing kind — would assure us that these dates are not only not too early, but in all probability not quite early enough.

The whole *ordonnance* and handling of the play, whether we look at plot, character, diction, or versification, speak a period at which the poet has already learned a great deal, but has not learned everything. He has already — we shall dwell more on this later — acquired the full disposition of the chronicle-play after a fashion which nobody but himself had yet shown; but he has not discovered the full secret of diversifying and adorning it. The historic page is translated into a dramatic one with the indefinable mastery — in adjusting to the theatre the "many actions of many men" at many places and times — which perhaps no other dramatist has ever fully shown. But, to mention nothing else, there is a want of tragi-comic relief; the history, interesting as it is, is still too much of a *mere* history. So, in the second respect, the poet has left his predecessors, and even to some extent himself, far behind in the art of breathing a soul into the figures of the historic tapestry; but he has not yet made it, as he was to make it later, a wholly complete and individual soul. Of the central

## INTRODUCTION

figure we shall speak anon ; but it is almost more important that the accessories, though never mere “supers,” still lack that full Shakespearean individuality “in the round” of which the poet is so prodigal later. The Queen is a gracious sketch ; it requires the enthusiasm of the commentator to detect much that is very distinct even in Bolingbroke. Aumerle, a character of which Shakespeare later would at least probably have made a very striking and subtle portrait, remains enigmatic ; or rather not so much enigmatic as with no enigmas or problems posed. They have, many of them, the rudiments of the great Shakespearean quality of “setting the principal character going” ; but as that character itself is not fully worked out, so their powers are not fully called into action. They help to show us further developments of Richard’s incurable “redelessness,” as one great contemporary of his had called it ; they give occasion to the feeble flashes and the constant breakdowns of the *lepus non leopardus*, as he had been called by another contemporary, ingenious if not so great. But in their case, as in his, the last vivifying touch has not quite been put.

The same interesting character of transition is over the diction, in the wider sense, and the verse. The latter is far advanced beyond the chaos of the earliest plays, where rhyme and blank verse, “fourteeners” and sheer doggerel, lyrical measures and prose, jostle each other as Shakespeare successively and impartially experiments with the imperfect implements of his predecessors. The blank verse itself has made great strides ; it is one of the



## KING RICHARD II

most noticeable points of that contrast with Marlowe, to which we shall come presently, that Shakespeare has improved upon the stately staccato of the “dead shepherd” almost as much as Marlowe himself had improved in his normal passages on the not even stately stump of “Gorboduc.” But it is still not perfectly flexible and cursive; it has not completely mastered the secrets of the pause, and the varied trisyllabic and disyllabic foot, and the consequent verse paragraph. There is more rhyme than there need be; there is even the quatrain, which hardly even Dryden, in his first flush of passion for rhyme on the stage, would have ventured to endorse. And on the other hand, there is no (or next to no) prose — that remarkable provider of relief, appetite, and many other good things in the intervals of tragic verse. The longer speeches still possess something, nay much, of that *tirade* character — that rhetorical rather than poetical *ordonnance* — which disappears so marvellously in the tragedies of the greatest time even where rhetoric was almost excusable.

The diction of the play, from the present point of view, is a subject almost more interesting, but much more delicate and uncertain. Speaking from many years’ reading, I should say that “Richard II” is the most *carefully* written of all Shakespeare’s plays. A certain constraint is over almost all of it — over all of it perhaps, except some of those passages which, for any evidence that we have, may be of much later date than the bulk of the piece. There is nothing of the almost

## INTRODUCTION

riotous variety and license of the earliest dramas. There is marked abstinence, as a rule — of course with exceptions — from that play on words which, as some would have it, was the very breath of Shakespeare's nostrils. The Marlowesque magniloquence appears; but it is almost always studiously toned, adjusted, clarified. In short, in this, as in other matters, the poet is between his two periods of freedom, and in one, as it were, almost of pupillage. He is afraid, perhaps he does not even wish, to "let himself go." He breaks away and soars sometimes, but not very often, in the direction of sublimity; he scarcely ever breaks away in the other direction of homeliness. He is, on the lines which he is following, almost "correct." And the worst that can be said of the play is that this approach to correctness brings with it the inevitable concomitant of a certain loss of colour.

It is probable that this correctness — not less relatively certain because it is not according to the Three Unities — has done the piece harm with some critics in the inevitable comparison with Marlowe's "Edward II." Shakespeare has despised, as he always did despise, the illegitimate attractions; and there is nothing answering to Edward's fatal passion for Gaveston to excuse — if it can be called excuse — the misdoings of Edward's great-grandson. And Shakespeare was already discarding, though he had not yet quite discarded, the *incomprehensibility* of Marlowe. That mighty but incomplete and far from universal genius always, as his continuer in the next generation said, "threw himself headlong into clouds" and abode in them, with the profit as with

## KING RICHARD II

the disadvantage of his dwelling-place. Lamb may be right in taking the pathos of Edward's ghastly and degrading end as greater than that of the final moment, which becomes Richard better than any passage of his happier life. But the decision is at least open to argument. Lamb, exquisite critic as he was, was always a little liable to the exquisite critics' sin of preferring what the vulgar do not know to what they do, and in his time Marlowe was all but utterly unknown. In almost every other respect "Richard II" seems to me to have the advantage. Any disjointedness in it — and there is not so very much — sinks out of sight beside the absolute patchwork of Marlowe's play, both in plot and character. In the former respect the earlier dramatist has hardly even come near the secret of the chronicle-play, which in our text Shakespeare has nearly, if not quite, mastered. In character the failure to "join the flats" is more obvious still. Richard, as we have admitted, is rather more an assemblage of traits or studies, admirably drawn for the composition of a type of the frivolous and irresolute, but æsthetically capable, king, than an individual. But Edward is three gentlemen (and three rather incompatible gentlemen) at once or in succession, — a contemptible indulger in an unworthy affection, a haughty and despotic Plantagenet, and a meek and persecuted victim. Isabel is worse. For half the play and more she is a true and loving wife, suffering, but proof against, the coldness, and worse, of her despicable husband. Then without a word to mark the transition, she becomes a murderous adulteress. Her lover, Morti-

## INTRODUCTION

mer, is more characterless than even the least characterful person of any consequence in our play ; and the same may be said of Gaveston, while the rest pretend to nothing and achieve what they pretend to. There are splendid speeches ; but the best is not superior to several that are found here. And the play as a whole — immense as is its advance upon anything that we have certainly or probably anterior to it — is, after all, mainly interesting, not like “Tamburlaine” and “Faustus” and the “Jew of Malta,” for itself, but because of its position in turn as a stepping-stone of vantage to Shakespeare.”<sup>1</sup>

We may therefore turn with a clear conscience to the principal object of this paper, the appreciation of “Richard II” in and for itself. Only a careful and continuous reading of its remarkable kind from “Kyng Johan” to “Perkin Warbeck” will show clearly how far Shakespeare has in it got towards the perfection of “Henry V,” or even of the highest example of the style — an example not usually reckoned of it and undoubtedly crossed with the romantic drama — “Antony and Cleopatra.” He was something of a novice even as compared with

<sup>1</sup> I have thought it better not to attempt examination of the problem — only recently posed, and with its documents not yet easily accessible to the ordinary reader — of the relation of our play to the piece found in the Egerton MS. 1994, printed by Halliwell in a few copies, and by Herr Keller in the “Jahrbuch” of the German Shakespeare Society for 1899, and excellently handled by Professor Boas in the “Fortnightly Review” for September, 1902. Without citation and expatiation, for which there is here no room, such examination would be unprofitable and almost unintelligible. Only the latter part of this piece overlaps our play, and the better opinion seems to be that Shakespeare did not so much use it as a canvas for his own work as presupposed knowledge of it on the part of his audience.

## KING RICHARD II

himself in "Henry V"; much more as compared with himself when he wrote "I am dying, Egypt, dying," and

"Peace, peace !

Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,  
That sucks the nurse asleep ? "

He was denied the patriotic interest of the first play and the intensely human interest of the second. He denied himself, as has been said, the artful aid of tragicomic by-plot and by-character. He had no hero in the old sense ; Bolingbroke, though wronged undoubtedly, is as undoubtedly an usurper, and does and says nothing to conciliate the readers' or spectators' interest. He was not yet able — or he did not yet attempt — to make of Richard, in his inferior way, what he has made of Hamlet and Lear and Othello ; what he has almost made of Leontes and quite of Prospero. Yet he has done wonders.

In the first place, as said above, the story *runs*. It is not mere tapestry ; it is tapestry — so to speak — cinematographed. The scenes are not disjointed ; the personages are not dead ; they do not appear merely promiscuous. Already the minor incidents — the fruitless appeal of the Duchess of Gloucester to York, which breaks her heart and deprives him of her support at the pinch ; the quarrel of Fitzwater and Aumerle — have something, if not quite enough, of that almost demoniacal expertness of interweaving which makes the smallest by-play of the later dramas conducive somehow to the end. The purple patches of poetry are not merely scattered anyhow ; they serve to fix the wandering and revive the sated attention ; to hand the reader on from act to act

## INTRODUCTION

and scene to scene until the end. For a play so destitute of comic attraction—even “Richard III” is not its parallel here, for the mighty scene of the seduction of Anne puts in sufficient security, in a kind saturnine and tragicomic indeed, but still comic enough—the hold which it has on the reader is extraordinary. We are not impatient even of “Rushy, Bagot here, and Green,” though they are surely either the most audaciously insignificant villains, or the best good men with a total absence of attractiveness and an undeserved fate, that poet or dramatist or novelist ever drew. They produce the effect of being, what they very probably were, quite respectable under-secretaries; and yet we can read them with patience, such as the under-secretary of real life rarely wins. The bickerings of Bolingbroke and Mowbray, the minor bickerings of Fitzwater and Aumerle, the ineffectual honesty of old York, the half-diplomatic, half-hypocritical meekness of Bolingbroke when he appears on his promotion,—all these things have very little interest in themselves. Yet in some strange way they are readable without the least effort, whereas the minor drama of this kind and time requires direct and sometimes enormous effort to screw oneself to its perusal. And of other parts, and some speeches even of these parts, something very different has to be said.

It is probable that, if any explanation is to be sought of this beyond the simplest and perhaps wisest one, this interest after all depends on the projection of the title-character, imperfect as that character may seem beside Hamlet or Lear. The modern historian, I believe, is

## KING RICHARD II

apt to doubt whether this projection is entirely fair; a doubt which, it will be remembered, was anticipated generally by a much more agreeable person than the modern historian, Miss Diana Vernon, in her complaint of Shakespeare's "Lancastrian partialities." Richard, they say now, was not so much a mere petulant weakling as a statesman before his time, who tried to break the power of the feudal nobles and to govern by a "government." But this, even if it had been likely to enter Shakespeare's head — and it would be rash indeed to say that anything was *not* likely to enter that head — would have been very unlikely indeed to enter the head of any of his historical authorities, and would besides have been a very doubtfully dramatisable conception. The question is how far Shakespeare, taking Richard as a type of royal *impotentia* — of the alternate excesses and defects of a weak and luxurious nature — has given a satisfactory portraiture. I venture to think that the dissatisfaction which is sometimes expressed is rather a case of those "second" thoughts which, as the wisest have decided, are not "best" at all; though the third, which are corrected firsts, often are. It is the essence of Richard that he has *no* essence, no ruling passion, no predominant vice, no character at all. The moods chase each other over his temperament as "waves of shadow go over the wheat," and with as little connection or permanent record. He is irresolute; but his irresolution, when he is irresolute, is not, like that of Hamlet, an inability to decide on and adopt means while quite clearly perceiving the end, but an entire want of certainty of pur-

## INTRODUCTION

pose, of perception of an end, altogether. He is *impotens* — impulsively petulant and ungovernable. But this other vice of his is again not, like that of Lear, an ever-present curse, excusable almost as a natural infirmity; for he can, for instance, devise and sustain a course of deliberate and elaborate diplomacy, not to say hypocrisy, in the Bolingbroke-Mowbray case. He is thus really a King of shreds and patches. The only continuity possible is given to him by the insinuation into our minds — really a very great triumph of art for all it be so hidden — of a willingness to believe him one and whole and possible. The “suspension of disbelief” is complete. At first, despite the ugly glimpses of treachery and tyranny which are needed to warn us of the future and justify it, he is a dignified and intelligent monarch enough. It would be difficult to prescribe a course of outward conduct in the circumstances more respectable. The deathbed scene with John of Gaunt brings out the hints that have been given of the worse side of his character; but he recovers some respect for enterprise, if not exactly for wisdom, by undertaking so unpleasant and ungrateful a task as an Irish expedition was already well known to be. The collapse — the revolution from headstrong tyrant to self-pitying and impotent sentimentalist — is accounted for with a sufficiency of circumstance which is, as a rule, wanting entirely in the earlier and too often in the later Elizabethan drama. He has no root; and he withers away under the repeated sunstrokes of the invasion of Bolingbroke, the defection of the lords, the melting away of



## KING RICHARD II

Salisbury's forces, the submission of York to the enemy, and the execution of his friends. Henceforward he *does* nothing till his last too late outburst of despairing bravery. He only talks, but he does this with surprising versatility and extraordinary effect. It may be very much doubted whether Shakespeare knew much or anything of the direct and enthusiastic interest in literature which Chaucer and Gower and Froissart had all experienced from Richard ; but he has given Richard himself what is kindly called "the literary temperament" with a vengeance. The King only loses the right to say *Qualis artifex pereo* because, luckily for him, at the moment when he perishes he ceases to be an artist and becomes once more a man. From the moment when he lands at Barkloughly Castle the histrionic mood, accompanied by a wonderful gusto and self-identification, is upon him. He begins by a beautiful "Address of a Monarch returning to his Realm and Beset by Traitors," follows it up by another—one of the finest things if not quite the finest class in Shakespeare—on the divinity of monarchy itself; and that by an exquisite act of humiliation and self-abandonment,—the poetical quality of these *tirades* rising as the moral thermometer of the speaker falls, till the weak wing drops suddenly in the merely splenetic and at last truly personal outburst,

"By heaven, I'll hate him everlastingly,  
That bids me be of comfort evermore!"

Here the last of the Plantagenets becomes a mere Sir Francis Clavering,—who, indeed, was of an excellent

## INTRODUCTION

family and doubtless had, like others, Plantagenet blood in him. He recovers his rhetoric and almost his poetry at the parley on the walls of Flint, and becomes, in the famous speech accepting his deposition, again quite exquisitely pathetic; so much so that we think he can no further go. But Shakespeare can; and the actual deposition scene, rising ever and ever to the "mockery king of snow" passage that crowns it, would be as intolerably agonising as "Lear" itself if we did not know the very different facts. The paring with the Queen, much more subdued, is in the same style; and the key is kept with a skill almost diabolic or almost divine in York's description — the most famous passage of the many famous ones in the play — of the entry into London. Only the chill of Pontefract frees him from this *histrionica passio*. Some may see traces of it in the long soliloquy, full of fantastic conceits, which opens the murder scene. I cannot agree with them. In the shadow of death he is at last undazzled; and if he gropes a little at first in thought one may pardon him. Nothing, I think, can be more hopelessly uncritical than to despise the bitter jests to the faithful groom, "Thanks, noble peer!" and the malediction on the ingratitude of roan Barbary, as trivial. These things are natural; there is no rhetoric about them; and they bring with them the sting of reflection on his own tameness which rouses him to die like his father's son and like a King of England.

Is it paradoxical to hold that for the better hooking together of patches so purple a "King of patches" was required? That if Richard had had greater unity some

## KING RICHARD II

sacrifice of show-passages must have resulted? And is it presumptuous to suggest that Shakespeare was probably at this time young enough not to care to sacrifice his purple patches on the one hand, and on the other too young quite to know how to bring them in, as he brings them in later, so that they are not patches at all? I should be quite content to abide his own judgment on the point.

The subordination of the other characters to this uncentral centre has been glanced at; but it is noteworthy enough for a further glance. The almost suppression — important as is his part and frequently as he figures — of Bolingbroke is very curious. Except in the scenes with Norfolk, where he is playing a part in two senses, and in the parting with his father, where both are allowed more than patches of the purple so freely displayed elsewhere, his outline seems to be left colourless, not so much by accident as of design. Miss Diana Vernon might have said that Shakespeare could find no attractive way of presenting him distinctly, and so exercised his Lancastrian partiality in leaving him indistinct. His father, a masterly fragment, is a fragment only; and the amiable imbecility of Edmund of York is faithfully and almost daringly photographed. One scene — the family squabble between himself and his Duchess over the rather passive body of their son Aumerle — is one of the few in Shakespeare which rather perilously approach the ridiculous that is not meant to be so — another sign of immaturity. But there is hardly any such in the sketch of the little Queen Isabel, whom Shakespeare has

## INTRODUCTION

skilfully abstained from representing as the mere child she was, while indicating her youthfulness and at the same time indirectly rebutting the scandal introduced by Bolingbroke in his sentence on Green and Bushy. Of the minor characters the hopeless, faded figure of the Duchess of Gloucester — faithful unto death but uselessly — and the steady loyalty of the Bishop of Carlyle attract most attention. But it is practically evident that the poet took very little trouble to attract much upon them. With such a main figure and such accessories it is clear that the drama cannot be expected to affect us as do some others, even some probably earlier than itself. It is, as has been said, the purest *history* of them all. Even the enigmatical and disputed “Henry VI” has episodes and characters which approach nearer to pure tragedy, while, as has been said also, “Richard II” never approaches pure comedy or any comedy at all. It can then affect us only in two ways; first, by its story, its actual historic tale, and we need not repeat that it does that most satisfactorily. Its other possible appeal is the appeal of sheer poetry — of rememberable and delectable lines and passages. Hardly anybody can need to be told that it answers this test triumphantly. There is scarcely a play of the canonical seven and thirty that is more open to the reproach of being “made up of quotations.” From the very first line onwards, but especially from the parting colloquy of Gaunt and Bolingbroke with the speech

“ All places that the eye of heaven visits,”

## KING RICHARD II

and the still more famous retort about "the frosty Caucasus"; Richard's invidious but most effective sketch of Bolingbroke's popularity-hunting; the magnificent eulogium-invective of Gaunt on England and against Richard; the King's sarcastic inquiry, one of the numerous passages where Shakespeare shows how he, like all wise men, was perfectly aware of what fools call faults in them,

"Can sick men play so nicely with their names?"

—all these things came before the end of the first scene of the second act. Later, all the passages enumerated above as characteristic of Richard's presentment contain "beauties" as do many others; and I do not know that the famous first line of Richard's last scene and sub-scene,

"The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee!"

is not, for all its lameness and deviousness, one of Shakespeare's lesser triumphs. For if it be a fond and vain heresy to maintain that poetry must always use the language of common life, there can be no doubt that there are times when the language of common life is the highest poetry; and this unreverend colloquialism is, as it were, the final explosion of the King's rhetoric, the tearing off of his mask, the appearance of his real and virile speech and personage.

The "preceptists" of criticism, as the Spaniards call them, may complain, if they like, that a play of such construction and such appeals lacks alike the true classi-

## INTRODUCTION

cal and the true romantic virtue — that it is a nondescript and therefore not to be approved. Let us not balk our enjoyment with any such fantastic niceness. One would indeed have been sorry had Shakespeare seen fit not to outgo the scheme and scale of “Richard II.” Among the plays that come nearest to it, it is certainly inferior to “King John”; and its merits, though more even, do not approach the highest of those of the more irregular, more chaotic, and very much more stagey “Richard III.” The almost entire absence of the proper attraction of feminine character would in any case tell heavily against it even in comparison with these plays themselves — with Constance and with Margaret and with Anne. Of the still higher romantic interest of still greater dramas it has absolutely nothing; and one must again and again return to the curious way in which Shakespeare has here, and here alone, said, as it were, to the fanatics against tragi-comedy: “Well, take your tragedy without your comedy for once, and see how you like it!” But to those who can be contented with what a thing is, instead of wishing it to be something it is not, “Richard II” has no small attractions; and these are very greatly heightened to those perhaps sophisticated tastes which like to take “what it is” to pieces and see the origin of their pleasure if they can.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.



**THE TRAGEDY OF  
KING RICHARD II**



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ<sup>1</sup>

KING RICHARD the Second.

JOHN OF GAUNT, Duke of Lancaster, }  
EDMUND OF LANGLEY, Duke of York, } uncles to the King.

HENRY, surnamed BOLINGBROKE, Duke of Hereford, son to John  
of Gaunt; afterwards KING HENRY IV.

DUKE OF AUMERLE, son to the Duke of York.

THOMAS MOWBRAY, Duke of Norfolk.

DUKE OF SURREY.

EARL OF SALISBURY.

LORD BERKLEY.

BUSHY, }  
BAGOT, } servants to King Richard.  
GREEN, }

EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

HENRY PERCY, surnamed Hotspur, his son.

LORD ROSS.

LORD WILLOUGHBY.

LORD FITZWATER.

Bishop of Carlisle.

Abbot of Westminster.

Lord Marshal.

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP.

SIR PIERCE of Exton.

Captain of a band of Welshmen.

QUEEN to King Richard.

DUCHESS OF YORK.

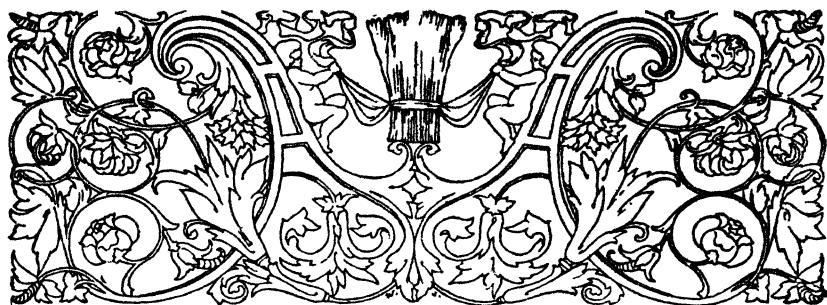
DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.

Lady attending on the Queen.

Lords, Herald, Officers, Soldiers, two Gardeners, Keeper, Messenger, Groom, and other Attendants.

SCENE: *England and Wales*

<sup>1</sup> Four editions of the play in Quarto (1597, 1598, 1608, 1615) were published before the First Folio in 1623. The Third Quarto supplied important additions. (See Act IV, Sc. i, lines 154-318.) The First Folio divided the piece into Acts and Scenes for the first time. A list of "dramatis personæ" was first given by Rowe in 1709.

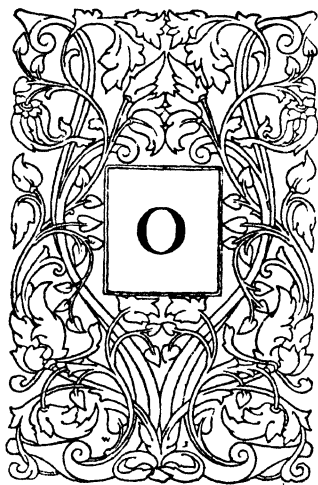


ACT FIRST — SCENE I — LONDON

KING RICHARD'S PALACE

*Enter KING RICHARD, JOHN OF GAUNT, with other Nobles and Attendants*

KING RICHARD



LD JOHN OF GAUNT,  
time-honour'd Lancaster,  
Hast thou, according to thy oath  
and band,  
Brought hither Henry Hereford  
thy bold son,  
Here to make good the boister-  
ous late appeal,  
Which then our leisure would  
not let us hear,  
Against the Duke of Norfolk,  
Thomas Mowbray?

GAUNT. I have, my liege.

K. RICH. Tell me, moreover, hast thou sounded him,  
If he appeal the duke on ancient malice;

1 *Old John of Gaunt*] John of Gaunt (or Ghent), Duke of Lancaster, was born in 1340. He was therefore no more than fifty-eight in 1398, the year to which the events in this scene belong.

Or worthily, as a good subject should, 10  
On some known ground of treachery in him?

GAUNT. As near as I could sift him on that argument,  
On some apparent danger seen in him  
Aim'd at your highness, no inveterate malice.

K. RICH. Then call them to our presence; face to  
face,  
And frowning brow to brow, ourselves will hear  
The accuser and the accused freely speak:  
High-stomach'd are they both, and full of ire  
In rage deaf as the sea, hasty as fire.

*Enter BOLINGBROKE and MOWBRAY*

BOLING. Many years of happy days befall 20  
My gracious sovereign, my most loving liege!

Mow. Each day still better other's happiness;  
Until the heavens, envying earth's good hap,  
Add an immortal title to your crown!

K. RICH. We thank you both: yet one but flatters us,  
As well appeareth by the cause you come;

2 *band*] obligation; "band" and "bond" were both used indifferently in this sense. Cf. V, ii, 65, *infra*, where the early Quartos read *band* and the Folios read *bond*. In V, ii, 67, all the early editions read *bond*.

3 *Hereford*] This word is treated as a dissyllable throughout the play.

4 *the boisterous late appeal*] the recent accusation violently urged. In lines 9, 27, and elsewhere *infra*, "appeal" is used as a verb for "accuse."

12 *argument*] theme.

22 *Each day . . . happiness*] May each day surpass the happiness of its predecessor.

26 *the cause you come*] the business you come about.

Namely, to appeal each other of high treason.  
Cousin of Hereford, what dost thou object  
Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?

BOLING. First, heaven be the record to my speech ! 30  
In the devotion of a subject's love,  
Tendering the precious safety of my prince,  
And free from other misbegotten hate,  
Come I appellant to this princely presence.  
Now, Thomas Mowbray, do I turn to thee,  
And mark my greeting well ; for what I speak  
My body shall make good upon this earth,  
Or my divine soul answer it in heaven.  
Thou art a traitor and a miscreant,  
Too good to be so, and too bad to live, 40  
Since the more fair and crystal is the sky,  
The uglier seem the clouds that in it fly.  
Once more, the more to aggravate the note,  
With a foul traitor's name stuff I thy throat ;  
And wish, so please my sovereign, ere I move,  
What my tongue speaks my right drawn sword may  
prove.

Mow. Let not my cold words here accuse my zeal :  
'T is not the trial of a woman's war,  
The bitter clamour of two eager tongues,  
Can arbitrate this cause betwixt us twain ; 50  
The blood is hot that must be cool'd for this :  
Yet can I not of such tame patience boast

40 *Too good to be so*] Of too noble a descent to be so wicked.

43 *aggravate the note*] add to, intensify, the stigma or disgrace.

46 *right drawn sword*] sword drawn in a righteous cause.

As to be hush'd and nought at all to say:  
First, the fair reverence of your highness curbs me  
From giving reins and spurs to my free speech;  
Which else would post until it had return'd  
These terms of treason doubled down his throat.  
Setting aside his high blood's royalty,  
And let him be no kinsman to my liege,  
I do defy him, and I spit at him;  
Call him a slanderous coward and a villain:  
Which to maintain I would allow him odds,  
And meet him, were I tied to run afoot  
Even to the frozen ridges of the Alps,  
Or any other ground inhabitable,  
Where ever Englishman durst set his foot.  
Mean time let this defend my loyalty,  
By all my hopes, most falsely doth he lie.

60

BOLING. Pale trembling coward, there I throw my  
gage,  
Disclaiming here the kindred of the king;  
And lay aside my high blood's royalty,  
Which fear, not reverence, makes thee to except.  
If guilty dread have left thee so much strength  
As to take up mine honour's pawn, then stoop:  
By that and all the rites of knighthood else,  
Will I make good against thee, arm to arm,  
What I have spoke, or thou canst worse devise.

70

Mow. I take it up; and by that sword I swear,

59 *let him be*] assuming that he were.

63 *tied*] obliged.

65 *inhabitable*] uninhabitable, unfit for habitation.

Which gently laid my knighthood on my shoulder,  
I'll answer thee in any fair degree, 80  
Or chivalrous design of knightly trial:  
And when I mount, alive may I not light,  
If I be traitor or unjustly fight!

K. RICH. What doth our cousin lay to Mowbray's  
charge?

It must be great that can inherit us  
So much as of a thought of ill in him.

BOLING. Look, what I speak, my life shall prove it  
true;

That Mowbray hath received eight thousand nobles  
In name of lendings for your highness' soldiers,  
The which he hath detain'd for lewd employments, 90  
Like a false traitor and injurious villain.  
Besides I say and will in battle prove,  
Or here or elsewhere to the furthest verge  
That ever was survey'd by English eye,  
That all the treasons for these eighteen years  
Complotted and contrived in this land  
Fetch from false Mowbray their first head and spring.  
Further I say, and further will maintain  
Upon his bad life to make all this good,  
That he did plot the Duke of Gloucester's death, 100

---

82 *light*] alight, dismount.

85 *inherit us*] put us in possession. "Inherit" often means "own" or "possess," as II, i, 83, *infra*; but here that meaning has a causative force.

89 *In name of lendings*] Under the guise of loans.

100 *the Duke of Gloucester's death*] Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, Edward III's youngest son, and King Richard's uncle,

Suggest his soon-believing adversaries,  
And consequently, like a traitor coward,  
Sluiced out his innocent soul through streams of blood:  
Which blood, like sacrificing Abel's, cries,  
Even from the tongueless caverns of the earth,  
To me for justice and rough chastisement;  
And, by the glorious worth of my descent,  
This arm shall do it, or this life be spent.

K. RICH. How high a pitch his resolution soars!  
Thomas of Norfolk, what say'st thou to this? 110

Mow. O, let my sovereign turn away his face,  
And bid his ears a little while be deaf,  
Till I have told this slander of his blood,  
How God and good men hate so foul a liar.

K. RICH. Mowbray, impartial are our eyes and ears:  
Were he my brother, nay, my kingdom's heir,  
As he is but my father's brother's son,  
Now, by my sceptre's awe, I make a vow,  
Such neighbour nearness to our sacred blood  
Should nothing privilege him, nor partialize 120  
The unstooping firmness of my upright soul:  
He is our subject, Mowbray; so art thou:  
Free speech and fearless I to thee allow.

Mow. Then, Bolingbroke, as low as to thy heart,  
Through the false passage of thy throat, thou liest.

---

in reality engaged in a plot against King Richard along with both Mowbray and Bolingbroke. Mowbray betrayed the conspiracy to King Richard, who commissioned him to put the Duke of Gloucester out of the way. The Duke was clandestinely slain at Calais in 1397.

101 *Suggest . . . adversaries*] Incite the Duke's credulous enemies.

113 *slander of his blood*] slanderer of his kindred.

Three parts of that receipt I had for Calais  
Disbursed I duly to his highness' soldiers;  
The other part reserved I by consent,  
For that my sovereign liege was in my debt  
Upon remainder of a dear account, 130  
Since last I went to France to fetch his queen:  
Now swallow down that lie. For Gloucester's death,  
I slew him not; but to my own disgrace  
Neglected my sworn duty in that case.  
For you, my noble Lord of Lancaster,  
The honourable father to my foe,  
Once did I lay an ambush for your life,  
A trespass that doth vex my grieved soul;  
But ere I last received the sacrament  
I did confess it, and exactly begg'd 140  
Your grace's pardon, and I hope I had it.  
This is my fault: as for the rest appeal'd,  
It issues from the rancour of a villain,  
A recreant and most degenerate traitor:  
Which in myself I boldly will defend;  
And interchangeably hurl down my gage  
Upon this overweening traitor's foot,  
To prove myself a loyal gentleman

---

126 *receipt*] money received.

130 *remainder . . . account*] balance of a heavy sum owing to me.

131 *I went . . . his queen*] The speaker went in 1395 to negotiate a marriage between Richard and Isabella, daughter of Charles VI of France, which he concluded as proxy for the king next year. Queen Isabella was Richard II's second wife.

134 *my sworn duty*] apparently to protect the Duke from violence.

146 *interchangeably*] reciprocally; cf. V, ii, 98, *infra*.



Even in the best blood chamber'd in his bosom.  
In haste whereof, most heartily I pray 150  
Your highness to assign our trial day.

K. RICH. Wrath-kindled gentlemen, be ruled by me;  
Let's purge this choler without letting blood:  
This we prescribe, though no physician;  
Deep malice makes too deep incision:  
Forget, forgive; conclude and be agreed;  
Our doctors say this is no month to bleed.  
Good uncle, let this end where it begun;  
We'll calm the Duke of Norfolk, you your son.

GAUNT. To be a' make-peace shall become my  
age: 160

Throw down, my son, the Duke of Norfolk's gage.

K. RICH. And, Norfolk, throw down his.

GAUNT. When, Harry, when?  
Obedience bids I should not bid again.

K. RICH. Norfolk, throw down, we bid; there is no  
boot.

Mow. Myself I throw, dread sovereign, at thy foot.  
My life thou shalt command, but not my shame:  
The one my duty owes; but my fair name,  
Despite of death that lives upon my grave,  
To dark dishonour's use thou shalt not have.

150 *In haste whereof*] In order to hasten proof of my loyalty.

157 *this is no month to bleed*] Early almanacs noticed the best seasons for blood-letting.

162 *When . . . when ?*] An exclamation of impatience, like "Now, now!"

164 *there is no boot*] there is no use (in refusal).

168 *Despite . . . grave*] That lives on my grave in spite of death, after my death: an awkward inversion of phrase.

I am disgraced, impeach'd and baffled here; 170  
 Pierced to the soul with slander's venom'd spear,  
 The which no balm can cure but his heart-blood  
 Which breathed this poison.

K. RICH. Rage must be withstood:  
 Give me his gage: lions make leopards tame.

Mow. Yea, but not change his spots: take but my  
 shame,

And I resign my gage. My dear dear lord,  
 The purest treasure mortal times afford  
 Is spotless reputation: that away,  
 Men are but gilded loam or painted clay.  
 A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest 180  
 Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast.  
 Mine honour is my life; both grow in one;  
 Take honour from me, and my life is done:  
 Then, dear my liege, mine honour let me try;  
 In that I live and for that will I die.

K. RICH. Cousin, throw up your gage; do you begin.

BOLING. O, God defend my soul from such deep  
 sin!

Shall I seem crest-fallen in my father's sight?  
 Or with pale beggar-fear impeach my height  
 Before this out-dared dastard? Ere my tongue 190

170 *baffled*] humiliated, treated with ignominy. Cf. *Tw. Night*, V, i, 356:  
 "Alas, poor fool, how have they *baffled* thee!"

189 *beggar-fear*] timidity habitual to beggars. Thus the first Quarto and  
 the First and Second Folios. The second, third, and fourth Quartos  
 read *begger-face*, i. e., with a face of supplication.  
*impeach my height*] question my high descent.

190 *out-dared*] defied to all extremity.

Shall wound my honour with such feeble wrong,  
 Or sound so base a parle, my teeth shall tear  
 The slavish motive of recanting fear,  
 And spit it bleeding in his high disgrace,  
 Where shame doth harbour, even in Mowbray's face.

[*Exit Gaunt.*]

K. RICH. We were not born to sue, but to command;  
 Which since we cannot do to make you friends,  
 Be ready, as your lives shall answer it,  
 At Coventry, upon Saint Lambert's day:  
 There shall your swords and lances arbitrate 200  
 The swelling difference of your settled hate:  
 Since we can not atone you, we shall see  
 Justice design the victor's chivalry.  
 Lord marshal, command our officers at arms  
 Be ready to direct these home alarms. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II—THE DUKE OF LANCASTER'S PALACE

*Enter JOHN OF GAUNT with the DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER*

GAUNT. Alas, the part I had in Woodstock's blood  
 Doth more solicit me than your exclams,  
 To stir against the butchers of his life!

193 *motive*] agent, instrument; here the tongue.

202 *atone you*] cause you to be at one, reconcile you.

203 *design*] designate, declare.

1 *the part . . . Woodstock's blood*] Thus the Quartos. The Folios read *Glosters*. The speaker is referring to his blood-relationship with his brother, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester.

2 *exclams*] outcries. Cf. *Rich. III*, I, ii, 52: "deep *exclams*."

# KING RICHARD II

30

[ 13 ]

Thou showest the naked pathway to thy life,  
Teaching stern murder how to butcher thee:  
That which in mean men we intitle patience  
Is pale cold cowardice in noble breasts.  
What shall I say? to safeguard thine own life,  
The best way is to venge my Gloucester's death.

GAUNT. God's is the quarrel; for God's substitute,  
His deputy anointed in His sight,  
Hath caused his death: the which if wrongfully,  
Let heaven revenge; for I may never lift  
An angry arm against His minister. 40

DUCH. Where then, alas, may I complain myself?

GAUNT. To God, the widow's champion and defence.

DUCH. Why, then, I will. Farewell, old Gaunt.  
Thou goest to Coventry, there to behold  
Our cousin Hereford and fell Mowbray fight:  
O, sit my husband's wrongs on Hereford's spear,  
That it may enter butcher Mowbray's breast!  
Or, if misfortune miss the first career,  
Be Mowbray's sins so heavy in his bosom, 50  
That they may break his foaming courser's back,  
And throw the rider headlong in the lists,  
A caitiff recreant to my cousin Hereford!  
Farewell, old Gaunt: thy sometimes brother's wife  
With her companion grief must end her life.

GAUNT. Sister, farewell; I must to Coventry:  
As much good stay with thee as go with me!

42 *complain myself*] make my plaint; a reflective use of "complain,"  
like the French "me plaindre."

49 *career*] onset, attack.

DUCH. Yet one word more: grief boundeth where it  
 falls,  
 Not with the empty hollowness, but weight:  
 I take my leave before I have begun, 60  
 For sorrow ends not when it seemeth done.  
 Commend me to thy brother, Edmund York.  
 Lo, this is all: — nay, yet depart not so;  
 Though this be all, do not so quickly go;  
 I shall remember more. Bid him — ah, what? —  
 With all good speed at Plashy visit me.  
 Alack, and what shall good old York there see  
 But empty lodgings and unfurnish'd walls,  
 Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones?  
 And what hear there for welcome but my groans? 70  
 Therefore commend me; let him not come there,  
 To seek out sorrow that dwells every where.  
 Desolate, desolate, will I hence and die:  
 The last leave of thee takes my weeping eye. [*Exeunt.*]

58-59 *grief . . . weight*] The wordiness of grief is likened to the restless boundings of a tennis-ball, despite the contrast between the “empty hollowness” of the ball and the “weight” of sorrow.

66 *Plashy*] the Duke of Gloucester's residence near Dunmow in Essex, now Pleshy.

68 *unfurnish'd walls*] bare walls, which in ordinary circumstances were covered with tapestry or hangings.

69 *offices*] the name usually bestowed on the pantry, kitchen, cellars, and servants' quarters of the house.

70 *hear*] Thus all the early editions, save some copies of the first Quarto, which read *cheere*. The words “there see” of line 67 make “hear there” in this line obviously right.

SCENE III — THE LISTS AT COVENTRY

*Enter the Lord Marshal and the DUKE OF AUMERLE*

MAR. My Lord Aumerle, is Harry Hereford arm'd ?

AUM. Yea, at all points ; and longs to enter in.

MAR. The Duke of Norfolk, sprightly and bold,  
Stays but the summons of the appellant's trumpet.

AUM. Why, then, the champions are prepared, and  
stay  
For nothing but his majesty's approach.

*The trumpets sound, and the KING enters with his nobles, GAUNT,  
BUSHY, BAGOT, GREEN, and others. When they are set, enter  
MOWBRAY in arms, defendant, with a Herald*

K. RICH. Marshal, demand of yonder champion  
The cause of his arrival here in arms :  
Ask him his name, and orderly proceed  
To swear him in the justice of his cause. 10

MAR. In God's name and the king's, say who thou art,  
And why thou comest thus knightly clad in arms ;  
Against what man thou comest, and what thy quarrel :  
Speak truly, on thy knighthood and thy oath ;  
As so defend thee heaven and thy valour !

Mow. My name is Thomas Mowbray, Duke of  
Norfolk ;

SCENE III (stage direction). *Lord Marshal*] The office of Lord Marshal, which belonged hereditarily to the Duke of Norfolk, was filled for the occasion by Thomas Holland, Duke of Surrey. Shakespeare failed to identify the Duke of Surrey as Lord Marshal, and introduces him in Act IV, Sc. i, under his own name as a new character.

Who hither come engaged by my oath —  
Which God defend a knight should violate! —  
Both to defend my loyalty and truth  
To God, my king, and my succeeding issue,  
Against the Duke of Hereford that appeals me;  
And, by the grace of God and this mine arm,  
To prove him, in defending of myself,  
A traitor to my God, my king, and me:  
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

20

*The trumpets sound. Enter BOLINGBROKE, appellant, in armour,  
with a Herald*

K. RICH. Marshal, ask yonder knight in arms,  
Both who he is, and why he cometh hither  
Thus plated in habiliments of war;  
And formally, according to our law,  
Depose him in the justice of his cause.

30

MAR. What is thy name? and wherefore comest thou  
hither,  
Before King Richard in his royal lists?  
Against whom comest thou? and what's thy quarrel?  
Speak like a true knight, so defend thee heaven!

BOLING. Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby,  
Am I; who ready here do stand in arms,  
To prove, by God's grace and my body's valour,  
In lists, on Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,  
That he is a traitor, foul and dangerous,

18 *God defend*] God forbid.

21 *appeals*] accuses. Cf. I, i, 4, *supra*, and note.

25 *truly fight*] fight in a just cause.

30 *Depose him*] Take his deposition.



To God of heaven, King Richard and to me; 40  
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

MAR. On pain of death, no person be so bold  
Or daring-hardy as to touch the lists,  
Except the marshal and such officers  
Appointed to direct these fair designs.

BOLING. Lord marshal, let me kiss my sovereign's  
hand,

And bow my knee before his majesty:  
For Mowbray and myself are like two men  
That vow a long and weary pilgrimage;  
Then let us take a ceremonious leave 50  
And loving farewell of our several friends.

MAR. The appellant in all duty greets your highness,  
And craves to kiss your hand and take his leave.

K. RICH. We will descend and fold him in our arms.  
Cousin of Hereford, as thy cause is right,  
So be thy fortune in this royal fight!  
Farewell, my blood; which if to-day thou shed,  
Lament we may, but not revenge thee dead.

BOLING. O, let no noble eye profane a tear  
For me, if I be gored with Mowbray's spear: 60  
As confident as is the falcon's flight  
Against a bird, do I with Mowbray fight.  
My loving lord, I take my leave of you;  
Of you, my noble cousin, Lord Aumerle;

57 *blood*] kinsman.

64 *my noble cousin, Lord Aumerle*] The Duke of Aumerle (Aumâle or Albemarle), as elder son and heir of the Duke of York, Edward III's fifth son, was first cousin of both Bolingbroke and Richard II. The Duke of York, who figures in later scenes, is Aumerle's father.

Not sick, although I have to do with death,  
But lusty, young, and cheerly drawing breath.  
Lo, as at English feasts, so I regret  
The daintiest last, to make the end most sweet:  
O thou, the earthly author of my blood,  
Whose youthful spirit, in me regenerate, 70  
Doth with a twofold vigour lift me up  
To reach at victory above my head,  
Add proof unto mine armour with thy prayers;  
And with thy blessings steel my lance's point,  
That it may enter Mowbray's waxen coat,  
And furbish new the name of John a Gaunt,  
Even in the lusty haviour of his son.

GAUNT. God in thy good cause make thee prosperous!  
Be swift like lightning in the execution;  
And let thy blows, doubly redoubled, 80  
Fall like amazing thunder on the casque  
Of thy adverse pernicious enemy:  
Rouse up thy youthful blood, be valiant and live.

BOLING. Mine innocency and Saint George to thrive!

Mow. However God or fortune cast my lot,  
There lives or dies, true to King Richard's throne,  
A loyal, just and upright gentleman:  
Never did captive with a freer heart  
Cast off his chains of bondage and embrace

67 *regreet*] salute or welcome (cf. lines 142 and 186, *infra*).

68 *The daintiest last*] The last course (of an English feast) usually consisted of the daintiest and sweetest delicacies.

75 *waxen coat*] coat of armour penetrable as wax.

84 *to thrive*] to speed me, to help me thrive.

His golden uncontroll'd enfranchisement, 90  
More than my dancing soul doth celebrate  
This feast of battle with mine adversary.  
Most mighty liege, and my companion peers,  
Take from my mouth the wish of happy years:  
As gentle and as jocund as to jest  
Go I to fight: truth hath a quiet breast.

K. RICH. Farewell, my lord: securely I espy  
Virtue with valour couched in thine eye.  
Order the trial, marshal, and begin.

MAR. Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby, 100  
Receive thy lance; and God defend the right!

BOLING. Strong as a tower in hope, I cry amen.

MAR. Go bear this lance to Thomas, Duke of  
Norfolk.

FIRST HER. Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby,  
Stands here for God, his sovereign and himself,  
On pain to be found false and recreant,  
To prove the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray,  
A traitor to his God, his king and him;  
And dares him to set forward to the fight.

SEC. HER. Here standeth Thomas Mowbray, Duke  
of Norfolk, 110  
On pain to be found false and recreant,  
Both to defend himself and to approve  
Henry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby,  
To God, his sovereign and to him disloyal;

95 *as to jest*] as to engage in sport or masquerade.

97-98 *securely . . . couched*] "securely," i. e., "confidently," should  
probably be taken as qualifying "couched."

Courageously and with a free desire  
Attending but the signal to begin.

MAR. Sound, trumpets; and set forward, combatants. [A charge sounded.]

Stay, the king hath thrown his warder down.

K. RICH. Let them lay by their helmets and their spears,

And both return back to their chairs again: 120

Withdraw with us: and let the trumpets sound

While we return these dukes what we decree.

[A long flourish.]

Draw near,

And list what with our council we have done.

For that our kingdom's earth should not be soil'd

With that dear blood which it hath fostered;

And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect

Of civil wounds plough'd up with neighbours' sword;

And for we think the eagle-winged pride

Of sky-aspiring and ambitious thoughts, 130

With rival-hating envy, set on you

To wake our peace, which in our country's cradle

Draws the sweet infant breath of gentle sleep;

Which so roused up with boisterous untuned drums,

With harsh-resounding trumpets' dreadful bray,

And grating shock of wrathful iron arms,

Might from our quiet confines fright fair peace,

---

118 *warder*] truncheon.

122 *While we return*] Until we make answer to, inform.

129-133 *And for . . . sleep*] These five lines are omitted from all the Folios, but appear in the first four Quartos, from the second of which Pope restored them to the text.

And make us wade even in our kindred's blood;  
 Therefore, we banish you our territories:  
 You, cousin Hereford, upon pain of life, 140  
 Till twice five summers have enrich'd our fields  
 Shall not regret our fair dominions,  
 But tread the stranger paths of banishment.

BOLING. Your will be done: this must my comfort be,  
 That sun that warms you here shall shine on me;  
 And those his golden beams to you here lent  
 Shall point on me and gild my banishment.

K. RICH. Norfolk, for thee remains a heavier doom,  
 Which I with some unwillingness pronounce:  
 The sly slow hours shall not determinate 150  
 The dateless limit of thy dear exile;  
 The hopeless word of "never to return"  
 Breathe I against thee, upon pain of life.

Mow. A heavy sentence, my most sovereign liege,  
 And all unlook'd for from your highness' mouth:  
 A dearer merit, not so deep a maim  
 As to be cast forth in the common air,  
 Have I deserved at your highness' hands.  
 The language I have learn'd these forty years,

140 *upon pain of life*] Thus the first four Quartos. The Folios read  
*upon pain of death*. The meaning of both phrases is the same.  
 All the early editions read *upon pain of life*, in line 153, *infra*.

142 *regreet*] salute. Cf. line 67, *supra*, and 186, *infra*.

150 *sly slow*] stealthy and slow. Thus substantially all the early editions,  
 save the Second Folio, which reads *flye slow*, i. e., "slow-flying."  
 "Sly slow hours" may be compared with "thievish minutes," *All's*  
*Well*, II, i, 165.

151 *dear*] grievous.

156 *A dearer merit*] A better reward.

My native English, now I must forgo: 160

And now my tongue's use is to me no more  
Than an unstringed viol or a harp;  
Or like a cunning instrument cased up,  
Or, being open, put into his hands  
That knows no touch to tune the harmony:  
Within my mouth you have engaol'd my tongue,  
Doubly portcullis'd with my teeth and lips;  
And dull unfeeling barren ignorance  
Is made my gaoler to attend on me.

I am too old to fawn upon a nurse, 170  
Too far in years to be a pupil now:  
What is thy sentence then but speechless death,  
Which robs my tongue from breathing native breath?

K. RICH. It boots thee not to be compassionate:  
After our sentence plaining comes too late.

Mow. Then thus I turn me from my country's light,  
To dwell in solemn shades of endless night.

K. RICH. Return again, and take an oath with thee.  
Lay on our royal sword your banish'd hands;  
Swear by the duty that you owe to God — 180  
Our part therein we banish with yourselves —  
To keep the oath that we administer:  
You never shall, so help you truth and God!  
Embrace each other's love in banishment;  
Nor never look upon each other's face;  
Nor never write, regreet, nor reconcile

181 *Our part therein . . . yourselves*] The king gives up any claim to their allegiance while in exile.

186 *regreet*] salute (one another); cf. lines 67 and 142, *supra*.

This louring tempest of your home-bred hate;  
Nor never by advised purpose meet  
To plot, contrive, or complot any ill  
'Gainst us, our state, our subjects, or our land. 190

BOLING. I swear.

Mow. And I, to keep all this.

BOLING. Norfolk, so far as to mine enemy: —  
By this time, had the king permitted us,  
One of our souls had wander'd in the air,  
Banish'd this frail sepulchre of our flesh,  
As now our flesh is banish'd from this land:  
Confess thy treasons ere thou fly the realm;  
Since thou hast far to go, bear not along  
The clogging burthen of a guilty soul. 200

Mow. No, Bolingbroke: if ever I were traitor,  
My name be blotted from the book of life,  
And I from heaven banish'd as from hence!  
But what thou art, God, thou, and I do know;  
And all too soon, I fear, the king shall rue.  
Farewell, my liege. Now no way can I stray;  
Save back to England, all the world's my way. [*Exit.*]

K. RICH. Uncle, even in the glasses of thine eyes  
I see thy grieved heart: thy sad aspect  
Hath from the number of his banish'd years 210  
Pluck'd four away. [*To Boling.*] Six frozen winters spent,  
Return with welcome home from banishment.

BOLING. How long a time lies in one little word!  
Four lagging winters and four wanton springs  
End in a word: such is the breath of kings.

193 *so far . . . enemy*] so far as one may speak to one's enemy.

GAUNT. I thank my liege, that in regard of me  
He shortens four years of my son's exile:  
But little vantage shall I reap thereby;  
For, ere the six years that he hath to spend  
Can change their moons and bring their times about, 220  
My oil-dried lamp and time-bewasted light  
Shall be extinct with age and endless night;  
My inch of taper will be burnt and done,  
And blindfold death not let me see my son.

K. RICH. Why, uncle, thou hast many years to live.

GAUNT. But not a minute, king, that thou canst give:  
Shorten my days thou canst with sullen sorrow,  
And pluck nights from me, but not lend a morrow;  
Thou canst help time to furrow me with age,  
But stop no wrinkle in his pilgrimage; 230  
Thy word is current with him for my death,  
But dead, thy kingdom cannot buy my breath.

K. RICH. Thy son is banish'd upon good advice,  
Whereto thy tongue a party-verdict gave:  
Why at our justice seem'st thou then to lour?

GAUNT. Things sweet to taste prove in digestion sour.  
You urged me as a judge; but I had rather  
You would have bid me argue like a father.  
O, had it been a stranger, not my child,  
To smooth his fault I should have been more mild: 240

231 *Thy word . . . death*] Thy word has validity with Time, who will accept it as an order for my death.

234 *a party-verdict gave*] was a party to the judgment just now pronounced.

239-242 *O, had . . . destroy'd*] These lines appear only in the first four Quartos. They are omitted from the Folios.



A partial slander sought I to avoid,  
And in the sentence my own life destroy'd.  
Alas, I look'd when some of you should say,  
I was too strict to make mine own away;  
But you gave leave to my unwilling tongue  
Against my will to do myself this wrong.

K. RICH. Cousin, farewell; and, uncle, bid him so:  
Six years we banish him, and he shall go.

[*Flourish. Exeunt King Richard and train.*]

AUM. Cousin, farewell: what presence must not  
know,

From where you do remain let paper show. 250

MAR. My lord, no leave take I; for I will ride,  
As far as land will let me, by your side.

GAUNT. O, to what purpose dost thou hoard thy  
words,

That thou return'st no greeting to thy friends?

BOLING. I have too few to take my leave of you,  
When the tongue's office should be prodigal  
To breathe the abundant dolour of the heart.

GAUNT. Thy grief is but thy absence for a time.

BOLING. Joy absent, grief is present for that time.

GAUNT. What is six winters? they are quickly  
gone. 260

BOLING. To men in joy; but grief makes one hour  
ten.

GAUNT. Call it a travel that thou takest for pleasure.

241 *A partial slander*] A reproach of partiality.

249 *presence*] king's majesty. The same word is used in line 289, *infra*,  
for the royal presence-chamber.

BOLING. My heart will sigh when I miscall it so,  
Which finds it an inforced pilgrimage.

GAUNT. The sullen passage of thy weary steps  
Esteem as foil wherein thou art to set  
The precious jewel of thy home return.

BOLING. Nay, rather, every tedious stride I make  
Will but remember me what a deal of world  
I wander from the jewels that I love. 270  
Must I not serve a long apprenticeship  
To foreign passages, and in the end,  
Having my freedom, boast of nothing else  
But that I was journeyman to grief?

GAUNT. All places that the eye of heaven visits  
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.  
Teach thy necessity to reason thus;  
There is no virtue like necessity.  
Think not the king did banish thee,  
But thou the king. Woe doth the heavier sit, 280  
Where it perceives it is but faintly borne.  
Go, say I sent thee forth to purchase honour  
And not the king exiled thee; or suppose

266 *foil*] the setting which sets off a jewel.

268-293 *Nay, rather . . . light*] These lines appear only in the first four

Quartos. They are omitted from the Folios.

272 *foreign passages*] foreign travel.

273-274 *Having . . . grief*] Having gained my freedom (after apprenticeship), I must boast of no employment but that of a journeyman in the service of grief. The metaphor is somewhat confused. The apprentice who wins his freedom becomes a "master," not a "journeyman." But Shakespeare cannot resist the quibble implied in the word "journey."

Devouring pestilence hangs in our air  
 And thou art flying to a fresher clime:  
 Look, what thy soul holds dear, imagine it  
 To lie that way thou go'st, not whence thou comest:  
 Suppose the singing birds musicians,  
 The grass whereon thou tread'st the presence strew'd,  
 The flowers fair ladies, and thy steps no more 290  
 Than a delightful measure or a dance;  
 For gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite  
 The man that mocks at it and sets it light.

BOLING. O, who can hold a fire in his hand  
 By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?  
 Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite  
 By bare imagination of a feast?  
 Or wallow naked in December snow  
 By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?  
 O, no! the apprehension of the good 300  
 Gives but the greater feeling to the worse:  
 Fell sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more  
 Than when he bites, but lanceth not the sore.

GAUNT. Come, come, my son, I'll bring thee on thy  
 way:  
 Had I thy youth and cause, I would not stay.

BOLING. Then, England's ground, farewell; sweet  
 soil, adieu;

289 *the presence strew'd*] the presence-chamber of the king strewn as it commonly was with rushes. Cf. line 249, *supra*.

292 *gnarling*] snarling.

299 *fantastic*] imaginary, existing only in imagination.

302 *Fell sorrow's tooth . . . rankle*] Cf. *Rich. III*, I, iii, 291: "His venom tooth will rankle to the death."

My mother, and my nurse, that bears me yet!  
 Where'er I wander, boast of this I can,  
 Though banish'd, yet a trueborn Englishman. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE IV — THE COURT

*Enter the KING, with BAGOT and GREEN at one door; and the  
 DUKE OF AUMERLE at another*

K. RICH. We did observe. Cousin Aumerle,  
 How far brought you high Hereford on his way?

AUM. I brought high Hereford, if you call him so,  
 But to the next highway, and there I left him.

K. RICH. And say, what store of parting tears were  
 shed?

AUM. Faith, none for me; except the north-east  
 wind,

Which then blew bitterly against our faces,  
 Awaked the sleeping rheum, and so by chance  
 Did grace our hollow parting with a tear.

K. RICH. What said our cousin when you parted  
 with him?

10

AUM. "Farewell:"  
 And, for my heart disdained that my tongue

1 *We did observe*] The king is here continuing a conversation with Bagot and Green which was begun before the scene opens. The subject of it — Bolingbroke's courtship of the common people — is explained in lines 23 *seq.*, *infra*.

6 *none for me*] none on my part.

8 *sleeping*] Thus the first and second Quartos. Other early editions read *sleepy*.

Should so profane the word, that taught me craft  
To counterfeit oppression of such grief,  
That words seem'd buried in my sorrow's grave.  
Marry, would the word "farewell" have lengthen'd  
hours

And added years to his short banishment,  
He should have had a volume of farewells;  
But since it would not, he had none of me.

K. RICH. He is our cousin, cousin; but 't is doubt, 20  
When time shall call him home from banishment,  
Whether our kinsman come to see his friends.  
Ourself and Bushy, Bagot here and Green  
Observed his courtship to the common people;  
How he did seem to dive into their hearts  
With humble and familiar courtesy,  
What reverence he did throw away on slaves,  
Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles  
And patient underbearing of his fortune,  
As 't were to banish their affects with him. 30  
Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench;  
A brace of draymen bid God speed him well  
And had the tribute of his supple knee,  
With "Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends;"  
As were our England in reversion his,  
And he our subjects' next degree in hope.

GREEN. Well, he is gone; and with him go these  
thoughts.

---

13 *that taught me craft*] "that" embodies the effect of the preceding  
clause, viz.: the refusal of the speaker's tongue to profane the word  
"farewell."

30 *affects*] affections.

Now for the rebels which stand out in Ireland,  
Expedient manauage must be made, my liege,  
Ere further leisure yield them further means 40  
For their advantage and your highness' loss.

K. RICH. We will ourself in person to this war:  
And, for our coffers, with too great a court  
And liberal largess, are grown somewhat light,  
We are inforced to farm our royal realm;  
The revenue whereof shall furnish us  
For our affairs in hand: if that come short,  
Our substitutes at home shall have blank charters;  
Whereto, when they shall know what men are rich,  
They shall subscribe them for large sums of gold 50  
And send them after to supply our wants;  
For we will make for Ireland presently.

*Enter BUSHY*

Bushy, what news?

BUSHY. Old John of Gaunt is grievous sick, my  
lord,  
Suddenly taken; and hath sent post haste  
To entreat your majesty to visit him.

K. RICH. Where lies he?

BUSHY. At Ely House.

39 *Expedient . . . made*] Expeditious arrangements must be made,  
rapid steps must be taken.

45 *farm . . . realm*] lease out the taxes, customs, and other revenues of  
the realm, so as to obtain ready money for pressing expenses.

48 *blank charters*] blank promissory notes extorted from rich men, with  
their signatures attached, the amount for which they were valid to  
be filled up by the exchequer officers; cf. "blanks," II, i, 250, *infra*.

---

K. RICH. Now put it, God, in the physician's mind  
To help him to his grave immediately! 60  
The lining of his coffers shall make coats  
To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars.  
Come, gentlemen, let's all go visit him:  
Pray God we may make haste, and come too late!

ALL. Amen.

*[Exeunt.]*

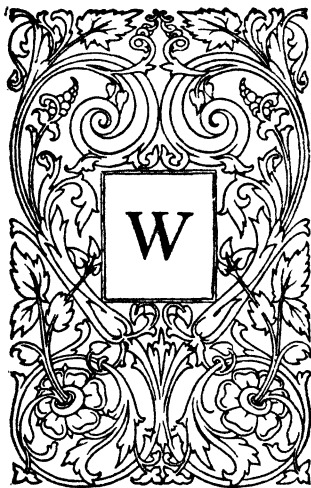


## ACT SECOND — SCENE I

### ELY HOUSE

*Enter JOHN OF GAUNT sick, with the DUKE OF YORK, &c.*

GAUNT



WILL THE KING COME,  
that I may breathe my last  
In wholesome counsel to his un-  
staid youth?

YORK. Vex not yourself, nor  
strive not with your breath;  
For all in vain comes counsel to  
his ear.

GAUNT. O, but they say the  
tongues of dying men  
Enforce attention like deep  
harmony:

Where words are scarce, they  
are seldom spent in vain,  
For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.  
He that no more must say is listen'd more

Than they whom youth and ease have taught to  
glose;

10 *glose*] speak flatteringly, be smooth-spoken.



More are men's ends mark'd than their lives before:

The setting sun, and music at the close,  
As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last,  
Writ in remembrance more than things long past:  
Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,  
My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear.

YORK. No; it is stopp'd with other flattering sounds,  
As praises, of whose taste the wise are fond,  
Lascivious metres, to whose venom sound  
The open ear of youth doth always listen; 20  
Report of fashions in proud Italy,  
Whose manners still our tardy apish nation  
Limps after in base imitation.

Where doth the world thrust forth a vanity —  
So it be new, there's no respect how vile —  
That is not quickly buzz'd into his ears?  
Then all too late comes counsel to be heard,  
Where will doth mutiny with wit's regard.  
Direct not him whose way himself will choose:  
'Tis breath thou lack'st, and that breath wilt thou 30  
lose.

12 *close*] cadence. Cf. *Tw. Night*, I, i, 4: "it had a *dying fall*" (of a musical setting).

18 *of whose taste . . . fond*] This is Collier's emendation of a passage which is manifestly corrupt in all the early editions. Most of these read *state for taste*, and *found for fond*. The First Folio reads quite hopelessly *of his state : then there are sound*.

25 *no respect*] no matter.

28-29 *Where will . . . choose*] Where the will rebels against what the understanding approves. Do not attempt to guide him who insists on taking his own course.

GAUNT. Methinks I am a prophet new inspired  
And thus expiring do foretell of him:  
His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last,  
For violent fires soon burn out themselves;  
Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short;  
He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes;  
With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder:  
Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,  
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.  
This royal throne of kings, this sceptre'd isle, 40  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise;  
This fortress built by Nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war;  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands;  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England, 50  
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,  
Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,  
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,  
For Christian service and true chivalry,  
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry  
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son;

34 *violent fires . . . themselves*] Cf. note on *All's Well*, I, i, 50.

41 *earth*] home, abode.

44 *Against infection*] As a protection against the pestilence.

52 *by their breed*] by reason of their hereditary strain (of virtue).

This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,  
Dear for her reputation through the world,  
Is now leased out, I die pronouncing it,  
Like to a tenement or pelting farm : 60  
England, bound in with the triumphant sea,  
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege  
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,  
With inky blots and rotten parchment bonds :  
That England, that was wont to conquer others,  
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.  
Ah, would the scandal vanish with my life,  
How happy then were my ensuing death !

*Enter KING RICHARD and QUEEN, AUMERLE, BUSHY, GREEN,  
BAGOT, ROSS, and WILLOUGHBY*

YORK. The king is come ; deal mildly with his youth ;  
For young hot colts being raged do rage the more. 70

QUEEN. How fares our noble uncle, Lancaster ?

K. RICH. What comfort, man ? how is 't with aged  
Gaunt ?

GAUNT. O, how that name befits my composition !  
Old Gaunt indeed, and gaunt in being old :  
Within me grief hath kept a tedious fast ;  
And who abstains from meat that is not gaunt ?

60 *pelting*] paltry.

64 *inky blots*] A contemptuous expression for written papers, or legal deeds.

70 *raged*] enraged.

73 *composition*] condition.

74 *Old Gaunt . . . old*] A quibble suggestive of senile decay.

For sleeping England long time have I watch'd;  
 Watching breeds leanness, leanness is all gaunt:  
 The pleasure that some fathers feed upon,  
 Is my strict fast; I mean, my children's looks; 80  
 And therein fasting, hast thou made me gaunt:  
 Gaunt am I for the grave, gaunt as a grave,  
 Whose hollow womb inherits nought but bones.

K. RICH. Can sick men play so nicely with their  
 names?

GAUNT. No, misery makes sport to mock itself:  
 Since thou dost seek to kill my name in me,  
 I mock my name, great king, to flatter thee.

K. RICH. Should dying men flatter with those that live?

GAUNT. No, no, men living flatter those that die.

K. RICH. Thou, now a-dying, say'st thou flatterest me. 90

GAUNT. O, no! thou diest, though I the sicker be.

K. RICH. I am in health, I breathe, and see thee ill.

GAUNT. Now, He that made me knows I see thee ill;  
 Ill in myself to see, and in thee seeing ill.  
 Thy death-bed is no lesser than thy land,  
 Wherein thou liest in reputation sick;  
 And thou, too careless patient as thou art,  
 Commit'st thy anointed body to the cure

83 *inherits*] owns, contains. Cf. I, i, 85, *supra*.

84 *nicely*] fantastically.

86 *Since . . . in me*] The banishment of his son and heir means for the speaker the extinction of his name.

94 *Ill . . . ill*] Thus all the early editions. Steevens suggested the omission of the words *to see*, in order to make the line of normal length. The meaning is: I am myself ill to look on, *i. e.*, visibly ill, and am seeing ill [*i. e.*, evil] in thee.

Of those physicians that first wounded thee:  
 A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown, 100  
 Whose compass is no bigger than thy head;  
 And yet, incaged in so small a verge,  
 The waste is no whit lesser than thy land.  
 O, had thy grandsire with a prophet's eye  
 Seen how his son's son should destroy his sons,  
 From forth thy reach he would have laid thy shame,  
 Deposing thee before thou wert possess'd,  
 Which art possess'd now to depose thyself.  
 Why, cousin, wert thou regent of the world,  
 It were a shame to let this land by lease; 110  
 But, for thy world enjoying but this land,  
 Is it not more than shame to shame it so?  
 Landlord of England art thou now, not king:  
 Thy state of law is bondsman to the law;  
 And thou —

K. RICH. A lunatic lean-witted fool,  
 Presuming on an ague's privilege,

102-103 *verge*, . . . *waste*] Both these are words of technical import; "verge" is the compass or circumference of the king's court under the Lord Steward's jurisdiction; "waste" is the destruction of houses or lands by a life tenant to the injury of the heir.

108 *possess'd*] possessed by a demon, mad. The word is used in the previous line in the ordinary sense of "come into possession."

114 *Thy state . . . law*] Thy legal state or position now being that of an ordinary landlord is subject to all ordinary restrictions or restraints of statute law. You have made yourself amenable to laws from which, if you behaved as a king, you would be exempt.

115 *And thou* —] Thus the four early Quartos. The Folios make these words part of the succeeding speech of the king.

Darest with thy frozen admonition  
 Make pale our cheek, chasing the royal blood  
 With fury from his native residence.  
 Now, by my seat's right royal majesty, 120  
 Wert thou not brother to great Edward's son,  
 This tongue that runs so roundly in thy head  
 Should run thy head from thy unreverent shoulders.

GAUNT. O, spare me not, my brother Edward's son,  
 For that I was his father Edward's son;  
 That blood already, like the pelican,  
 Hast thou tapp'd out and drunkenly caroused:  
 My brother Gloucester, plain well-meaning soul,  
 Whom fair befall in heaven 'mongst happy souls!  
 May be a precedent and witness good 130  
 That thou respect'st not spilling Edward's blood:  
 Join with the present sickness that I have;  
 And thy unkindness be like crooked age,  
 To crop at once a too long wither'd flower.  
 Live in thy shame, but die not shame with thee!  
 These words hereafter thy tormentors be!  
 Convey me to my bed, then to my grave:  
 Love they to live that love and honour have.

*[Exit, borne off by his Attendants.]*

121 *brother to great Edward's son*] brother of Edward the Black Prince (Richard II's father), who was eldest son of "great" Edward III.

122 *roundly*] bluntly, freely.

126 *like the pelican*] The pelican was commonly assumed to feed on blood sucked from its mother's breast.

133 *crooked*] a common epithet of "age" in Elizabethan poetry. The expression "crooked age" means "the last extremity of age."

138 *Love they to live*] Let them care to live.

K. RICH. And let them die that age and sullens have;  
For both hast thou, and both become the grave. 140

YORK. I do beseech your majesty, impute his words  
To wayward sickliness and age in him:  
He loves you, on my life, and holds you dear  
As Harry Duke of Hereford, were he here.

K. RICH. Right, you say true: as Hereford's love, so  
his;  
As theirs, so mine; and all be as it is.

*Enter NORTHUMBERLAND*

NORTH. My liege, old Gaunt commends him to your  
majesty.

K. RICH. What says he?

NORTH. Nay, nothing; all is said:  
His tongue is now a stringless instrument;  
Words, life and all, old Lancaster hath spent. 150

YORK. Be York the next that must be bankrupt so!  
Though death be poor, it ends a mortal woe.

K. RICH. The ripest fruit first falls, and so doth he;  
His time is spent, our pilgrimage must be.  
So much for that. Now for our Irish wars:  
We must supplant those rough rug-headed kerns,  
Which live like venom where no venom else

139 *sullens*] fits of moroseness.

145 *as Hereford's love*] *sc.* for the king; an ironical misinterpretation of  
York's somewhat ambiguous suggestion that Gaunt loves the king as  
dearly as his own son.

156 *rug-headed kerns*] shock-haired, light-armed Irish foot-soldiers.

157 *no venom else*] No venomous reptiles were supposed to live in Ireland.

But only they have privilege to live.  
And for these great affairs do ask some charge,  
Towards our assistance we do seize to us 160  
The plate, coin, revenues and moveables,  
Whereof our uncle Gaunt did stand possess'd.

YORK. How long shall I be patient? ah, how long  
Shall tender duty make me suffer wrong?  
Not Gloucester's death, nor Hereford's banishment,  
Not Gaunt's rebukes, nor England's private wrongs,  
Nor the prevention of poor Bolingbroke  
About his marriage, nor my own disgrace,  
Have ever made me sour my patient cheek,  
Or bend one wrinkle on my sovereign's face. 170  
I am the last of noble Edward's sons,  
Of whom thy father, Prince of Wales, was first:  
In war was never lion raged more fierce,  
In peace was never gentle lamb more mild,  
Than was that young and princely gentleman.  
His face thou hast, for even so look'd he,  
Accomplish'd with the number of thy hours;  
But when he frown'd, it was against the French  
And not against his friends; his noble hand  
Did win what he did spend, and spent not that 180  
Which his triumphant father's hand had won;  
His hands were guilty of no kindred blood,

167-168 *Nor the prevention . . . marriage*] Richard, by blackening Bolingbroke's character, caused the rejection of his suit, while in exile, to Marie, daughter of the Duke of Berry, first cousin of Charles VI, King of France.

177 *Accomplish'd . . . hours*] When he had reached the same age as thou.



But bloody with the enemies of his kin.

O Richard! York is too far gone with grief,  
Or else he never would compare between.

K. RICH. Why, uncle, what's the matter?

YORK.

O my liege,

Pardon me, if you please; if not, I, pleased

Not to be pardon'd, am content withal.

Seek you to seize and gripe into your hands

The royalties and rights of banish'd Hereford?

190

Is not Gaunt dead, and doth not Hereford live?

Was not Gaunt just, and is not Harry true?

Did not the one deserve to have an heir?

Is not his heir a well-deserving son?

Take Hereford's rights away, and take from time

His charters and his customary rights;

Let not to-morrow then ensue to-day;

Be not thyself; for how art thou a king

But by fair sequence and succession?

Now, afore God — God forbid I say true! —

200

If you do wrongfully seize Hereford's rights,

Call in the letters patents that he hath

By his attorneys-general to sue

His livery, and deny his offer'd homage,

185 *compare between*] make such a comparison between (Richard and his father).

190 *royalties*] feudal revenues. Cf. II, iii, 120, and III, iii, 113, *infra*.

203-204 *By his . . . homage*] A feudal tenant of full age was entitled to a writ of "livery," or "delivery," the grant of which constituted him full owner of his estate, independent of royal control, while the king accepted on that understanding the tenant's homage. "Attorneys-general" here refers to Bolingbroke's legal representatives, who had

You pluck a thousand dangers on your head,  
 You lose a thousand well-disposed hearts,  
 And prick my tender patience to those thoughts  
 Which honour and allegiance cannot think.

K. RICH. Think what you will, we seize into our  
 hands

His plate, his goods, his money and his lands. 210

YORK. I'll not be by the while: my liege, farewell:  
 What will ensue hereof, there's none can tell;  
 But by bad courses may be understood

That their events can never fall out good. [Exit.

K. RICH. Go, Bushy, to the Earl of Wiltshire straight:

Bid him repair to us to Ely House

To see this business. To-morrow next

We will for Ireland; and 't is time, I trow:

And we create, in absence of ourself,

Our uncle York lord governor of England; 220

For he is just and always loved us well.

Come on, our queen: to-morrow must we part;

Be merry, for our time of stay is short.

[Flourish. Exeunt King, Queen, Aumerle,  
 Bushy, Green, and Bagot.

NORTH. Well, lords, the Duke of Lancaster is dead.

ROSS. And living too; for now his son is duke.

WILLO. Barely in title, not in revenues.

a right to sue for and hold the writ of livery in their master's absence.  
 For the king to deny or refuse a feudal tenant's offered homage was  
 tantamount to ignoring his right over his property. Cf. II, iii,  
 129 seq., *infra*.

213 *by bad courses may be*] in regard to bad courses it may be.

214 *events*] consequences.

NORTH. Richly in both, if justice had her right.

ROSS. My heart is great; but it must break with  
silence,

Ere't be disburden'd with a liberal tongue.

NORTH. Nay, speak thy mind; and let him ne'er  
speak more

230

That speaks thy words again to do thee harm!

WILLO. Tends that thou wouldst speak to the Duke  
of Hereford?

If it be so, out with it boldly, man;

Quick is mine ear to hear of good towards him.

ROSS. No good at all that I can do for him;  
Unless you call it good to pity him,  
Bereft and gelded of his patrimony.

NORTH. Now, afore God, 't is shame such wrongs are  
borne

In him a royal prince and many moe

Of noble blood in this declining land.

240

The king is not himself, but basely led

By flatterers; and what they will inform,

Merely in hate, 'gainst any of us all,

That will the king severely prosecute

'Gainst us, our lives, our children, and our heirs.

ROSS. The commons hath he pill'd with grievous taxes,  
And quite lost their hearts: the nobles hath he fined  
For ancient quarrels, and quite lost their hearts.

WILLO. And daily new exactions are devised,

242 *what they will inform*] whatever information or accusation they will  
bring.

246 *pill'd*] pillaged, plundered.

As blanks, benevolences, and I wot not what: 250  
 But what, o' God's name, doth become of this?

NORTH. Wars have not wasted it, for warr'd he hath  
 not,

But basely yielded upon compromise  
 That which his noble ancestors achieved with blows:  
 More hath he spent in peace than they in wars.

ROSS. The Earl of Wiltshire hath the realm in farm.

WILLO. The king's grown bankrupt, like a broken man.

NORTH. Reproach and dissolution hangeth over him.

ROSS. He hath not money for these Irish wars,

His burthenous taxations notwithstanding,  
 But by the robbing of the banish'd duke.

NORTH. His noble kinsman: most degenerate King!  
 But, lords, we hear this fearful tempest sing,  
 Yet seek no shelter to avoid the storm;

We see the wind sit sore upon our sails,  
 And yet we strike not, but securely perish.

ROSS. We see the very wreck that we must suffer;  
 And unavoided is the danger now,  
 For suffering so the causes of our wreck.

250 *blanks*] blank charters or blank cheques for amounts signed by the donors, with the amounts left blank, to be filled in by the king's officers; cf. "blank charters," I, iv, 48 *supra*.

*benevolences*] forced loans. The word is pronounced as a quadrasyllable.

263 *hear . . . tempest sing*] Cf. *Tempest*, II, ii, 20: "Another storm brewing; I hear it sing i' the wind."

266 *strike . . . perish*] do not strike sail, but perish through overconfidence.

268 *unavoided*] unavoidable.

NORTH. Not so; even through the hollow eyes of death  
I spy life peering; but I dare not say 271  
How near the tidings of our comfort is.

WILLO. Nay, let us share thy thoughts, as thou dost ours.

ROSS. Be confident to speak, Northumberland:  
We three are but thyself; and, speaking so,  
Thy words are but as thoughts; therefore, be bold.

NORTH. Then thus: I have from le Port Blanc, a bay  
In Brittany, received intelligence  
That Harry Duke of Hereford, Rainold Lord Cobham,

That late broke from the Duke of Exeter, 281  
His brother, Archbishop late of Canterbury,  
Sir Thomas Erpingham, Sir John Ramston,  
Sir John Norbery, Sir Robert Waterton and Francis  
Quoint,

All these well furnish'd by the Duke of Bretagne  
With eight tall ships, three thousand men of war,

276 *Thy words . . . thoughts*] Thy words spoken to us in confidence are  
not to be treated as things spoken, but as things unexpressed, and  
merely thought.

279-280 *Rainold Lord Cobham, . . .*] None of the original editions give  
any sign of the omission of a line here; but a comparison of this  
speech with the passage in Holinshed, whence it has been somewhat  
carelessly transcribed, shows the need for a revision of the text.  
According to Holinshed, Thomas, the son and heir to Richard, Earl  
of Arundel, had lately broken from the custody of the king's half-  
brother, the Duke of Exeter, and had joined in Brittany his father's  
brother, Archbishop Arundel of Canterbury, Bolingbroke, and the  
rest. The hiatus may be filled by the words *The son of Richard,*  
*Earl of Arundel.*

Are making hither with all due expedience  
And shortly mean to touch our northern shore:  
Perhaps they had ere this, but that they stay  
The first departing of the king for Ireland. 290  
If then we shall shake off our slavish yoke,  
Imp out our drooping country's broken wing,  
Redeem from broking pawn the blemish'd crown,  
Wipe off the dust that hides our sceptre's gilt,  
And make high majesty look like itself,  
Away with me in post to Ravenspurgh;  
But if you faint, as fearing to do so,  
Stay and be secret, and myself will go.

ROSS. To horse, to horse! urge doubts to them that  
fear.

WILLO. Hold out my horse, and I will first be there.  
[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II — WINDSOR CASTLE

*Enter QUEEN, BUSHY, and BAGOT*

BUSHY. Madam, your majesty is too much sad:  
You promised, when you parted with the king,  
To lay aside life-harming heaviness,  
And entertain a cheerful disposition.

287 *expedience*] expedition.

292 *Imp out*] Repair, graft new feathers on.

293 *from broking pawn*] from the hands of low pawn-brokers.

296 *Ravenspurgh*] Formerly a port at the mouth of the Humber in York-shire, near Spurn Head; but its site has long since been washed away by encroachment of the sea.

QUEEN. To please the king I did; to please myself  
 I cannot do it; yet I know no cause  
 Why I should welcome such a guest as grief,  
 Save bidding farewell to so sweet a guest  
 As my sweet Richard: yet again, methinks,  
 Some unborn sorrow, ripe in fortune's womb, 10  
 Is coming towards me, and my inward soul  
 With nothing trembles: at some thing it grieves,  
 More than with parting from my lord the king.

BUSHY. Each substance of a grief hath twenty  
 shadows,  
 Which shows like grief itself, but is not so;  
 For sorrow's eye, glazed with blinding tears,  
 Divides one thing entire to many objects;  
 Like perspectives, which, rightly gazed upon,  
 Show nothing but confusion, eyed awry,  
 Distinguish form: so your sweet majesty, 20  
 Looking awry upon your lord's departure,  
 Find shapes of grief, more than himself, to wail;  
 Which, look'd on as it is, is nought but shadows  
 Of what it is not. Then, thrice-gracious queen,  
 More than your lord's departure weep not: more's not  
 seen;  
 Or if it be, 't is with false sorrow's eye,  
 Which for things true weeps things imaginary.

18-20 *perspectives . . . form*] The word "perspectives" is applied by Elizabethans not only to various optical instruments, — *e. g.*, telescopes, magnifying glasses, — and also (as here) to pictures or figures so constructed as to present to the direct view a distorted mass, but to an oblique glance a regularly defined shape or picture. Cf. *All's Well*, V, iii, 48 *seq.*

QUEEN. It may be so; but yet my inward soul  
 Persuades me it is otherwise: howe'er it be,  
 I cannot but be sad; so heavy sad, 30  
 As, though on thinking on no thought I think,  
 Makes me with heavy nothing faint and shrink.

BUSHY. 'T is nothing but conceit, my gracious lady.

QUEEN. 'T is nothing less: conceit is still derived  
 From some forefather grief; mine is not so,  
 For nothing hath begot my something grief;  
 Or something hath the nothing that I grieve:  
 'T is in reversion that I do possess;  
 But what it is, that is not yet known; what  
 I cannot name; 't is nameless woe, I wot. 40

*Enter GREEN*

GREEN. God save your majesty! and well met,  
 gentlemen:  
 I hope the king is not yet shipp'd for Ireland.

QUEEN. Why hopest thou so? 't is better hope he is;  
 For his designs crave haste, his haste good hope:  
 Then wherefore dost thou hope he is not shipp'd?

GREEN. That he, our hope, might have retired his  
 power,  
 And driven into despair an enemy's hope,

33 *conceit*] fancy

34 *'T is nothing less*] It's anything but that.

37-38 *Or something . . . possess*] "Hath" (l. 37) means "hath begot."

Something of which she does not yet know anything causes her present aimless grief. She possesses her sorrow in reversion, because the event for which she grieves has not yet come within her knowledge.

46 *retired his power*] withdrawn his forces.



Who strongly hath set footing in this land:  
The banish'd Bolingbroke repeals himself,  
And with uplifted arms is safe arrived 50  
At Ravenspurgh.

QUEEN. Now God in heaven forbid!

GREEN. Ah madam, 't is too true: and that is worse,  
The Lord Northumberland, his son young Henry Percy,  
The Lords of Ross, Beaumont, and Willoughby,  
With all their powerful friends, are fled to him.

BUSHY. Why have you not proclaim'd Northumber-  
land

And all the rest revolted faction traitors?

GREEN. We have: whereupon the Earl of Worcester  
Hath broke his staff, resign'd his stewardship,  
And all the household servants fled with him 60  
To Bolingbroke.

QUEEN. So, Green, thou art the midwife to my woe,  
And Bolingbroke my sorrow's dismal heir:  
Now hath my soul brought forth her prodigy,  
And I, a gasping new-deliver'd mother,  
Have woe to woe, sorrow to sorrow join'd.

BUSHY. Despair not, madam.

QUEEN. Who shall hinder me?  
I will despair, and be at enmity

49 *repeals himself*] repeals his sentence, recalls himself. Cf. IV, i, 86, *infra*.

57 *all the rest*] Thus the first Quarto. The other early editions read *the rest of the*, which spoils the metre. "Rest" is used here adjectivally in the sense of "remaining."

59 *his staff*] his staff of office as steward of the king's household.

With cozening hope : he is a flatterer,  
A parasite, a keeper back of death,  
Who gently would dissolve the bands of life,  
Which false hope lingers in extremity.

70

*Enter YORK*

GREEN. Here comes the Duke of York.

QUEEN. With signs of war about his aged neck;  
O, full of careful business are his looks!  
Uncle, for God's sake, speak comfortable words.

YORK. Should I do so, I should belie my thoughts:  
Comfort's in heaven; and we are on the earth,  
Where nothing lives but crosses, cares and grief.  
Your husband, he is gone to save far off,  
Whilst others come to make him lose at home:  
Here am I left to underprop his land,  
Who, weak with age, cannot support myself:  
Now comes the sick hour that his surfeit made;  
Now shall he try his friends that flatter'd him.

80

*Enter a Servant*

SERV. My lord, your son was gone before I came.

YORK. He was? Why, so! go all which way it will!  
The nobles they are fled, the commons they are cold,  
And will, I fear, revolt on Hereford's side.

72 *lingers in extremity*] causes to linger, prolongs, in extreme distress.

74 *signs of war*] armour.

77 *Should . . . thoughts*] This line is found in the first four Quartos, but is omitted from the Folios.

Sirrah, get thee to Plashy, to my sister Gloucester; 90  
 or Bid her send me presently a thousand pound:

Hold, take my ring.

SERV. My lord, I had forgot to tell your lordship,  
 To-day, as I came by, I called there;  
 But I shall grieve you to report the rest.

YORK. What is 't, knave?

SERV. An hour before I came, the duchess died.

YORK. God for his mercy! what a tide of woes  
 Comes rushing on this woeful land at once!  
 I know not what to do: I would to God, 100  
 So my untruth had not provoked him to it,  
 The king had cut off my head with my brother's.  
 What, are there no posts dispatch'd for Ireland?

or How shall we do for money for these wars?  
 Come, sister, — cousin, I would say, — pray, pardon me.  
 Go, fellow, get thee home, provide some carts  
 And bring away the armour that is there. [Exit servant.]

Gentlemen, will you go muster men?  
 If I know how or which way to order these affairs  
 Thus thrust disorderly into my hands, 110  
 Never believe me. Both are my kinsmen:  
 The one is my sovereign, whom both my oath  
 ! Hrr

blo  
 101 *untruth*] disloyalty, infidelity.

102 *The king . . . brother's*] A reference to the death of York's  
 brother, the Duke of Gloucester, who would, however, seem to  
 have been smothered, not beheaded.

105 *Come, sister, — cousin, I would say*] York is addressing the queen  
 as his cousin. But the news of the death of his sister-in-law, the  
 Duchess of Gloucester, is uppermost in his mind.

And duty bids defend; the other again  
Is my kinsman, whom the king hath wrong'd,  
Whom conscience and my kindred bids to right.  
Well, somewhat we must do. Come, cousin, I'll  
Dispose of you.

Gentlemen, go, muster up your men,  
And meet me presently at Berkeley.  
I should to Plashy too;  
But time will not permit: all is uneven,  
And everything is left at six and seven.

120

[*Exeunt York and Queen.*]

BUSHY. The wind sits fair for news to go to Ireland,  
But none returns. For us to levy power  
Proportionable to the enemy  
Is all impossible.

GREEN. Besides, our nearness to the king in love  
Is near the hate of those love not the king.

BAGOT. And that's the wavering commons: for their  
love  
Lies in their purses, and whoso empties them  
By so much fills their hearts with deadly hate.

130

BUSHY. Wherein the king stands generally condemn'd.

BAGOT. If judgement lie in them, then so do we,  
Because we ever have been near the king.

GREEN. Well, I will for refuge straight to Bristol  
castle:  
The Earl of Wiltshire is already there.

122 *at six and seven*] an early form of the common modern phrase "at sixes and sevens."

BUSHY. Thither will I with you; for little office  
The hateful commons will perform for us,  
Except like curs to tear us all to pieces.  
Will you go along with us?

140

BAGOT. No; I will to Ireland to his majesty.  
Farewell: if heart's presages be not vain,  
We three here part that ne'er shall meet again.

BUSHY. That's as York thrives to beat back Boling-  
broke.

GREEN. Alas, poor duke! the task he undertakes  
Is numbering sands and drinking oceans dry:  
Where one on his side fights, thousands will fly.  
Farewell at once, for once, for all, and ever.

BUSHY. Well, we may meet again.

BAGOT.

I fear me, never.

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III — WILDS IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

*Enter BOLINGBROKE and NORTHUMBERLAND with forces*

BOLING. How far is it, my lord, to Berkeley now?

NORTH. Believe me, noble lord,

I am a stranger here in Gloucestershire:  
These high wild hills and rough uneven ways  
Draws out our miles, and makes them wearisome;  
And yet your fair discourse hath been as sugar,  
Making the hard way sweet and delectable.  
But I bethink me what a weary way  
From Ravenspurgh to Cotswold will be found

In Ross and Willoughby, wanting your company, 10  
Which, I protest, hath very much beguiled  
The tediousness and process of my travel:  
But theirs is sweetened with the hope to have  
The present benefit which I possess;  
And hope to joy is little less in joy  
Than hope enjoy'd: by this the weary lords  
Shall make their way seem short, as mine hath done  
By sight of what I have, your noble company.

BOLING. Of much less value is my company 20  
Than your good words. But who comes here?

*Enter* HENRY PERCY

NORTH. It is my son, young Harry Percy,  
Sent from my brother Worcester, whencesoever.  
Harry, how fares your uncle?

PERCY. I had thought, my lord, to have learn'd his  
health of you.

NORTH. Why, is he not with the queen?

PERCY. No, my good lord; he hath forsook the court,  
Broken his staff of office and dispersed  
The household of the king.

NORTH. What was his reason?  
He was not so resolved when las' we spake together.

PERCY. Because your lordship was proclaimed traitor. 30  
But he, my lord, is gone to Ravenspurgh,  
To offer service to the Duke of Hereford,  
And sent me over by Berkeley, to discover

15 *hope to joy*] hope of joy.

What power the Duke of York had levied there;  
Then with directions to repair to Ravenspurgh.

NORTH. Have you forgot the Duke of Hereford, boy?

PERCY. No, my good lord, for that is not forgot  
Which ne'er I did remember: to my knowledge,  
I never in my life did look on him.

NORTH. Then learn to know him now; this is the  
duke. 40

PERCY. My gracious lord, I tender you my service,  
Such as it is, being tender, raw and young;  
Which elder days shall ripen and confirm  
To more approved service and desert.

BOLING. I thank thee, gentle Percy; and be sure  
I count myself in nothing else so happy  
As in a soul remembering my good friends;  
And, as my fortune ripens with thy love,  
It shall be still thy true love's recompense:  
My heart this covenant makes, my hand thus seals it. 50

NORTH. How far is it to Berkeley? and what stir  
Keeps good old York there with his men of war?

PERCY. There stands the castle, by yon tuft of trees,  
Mann'd with three hundred men, as I have heard;  
And in it are the Lords of York, Berkeley, and Seymour;  
None else of name and noble estimate.

*Enter ROSS and WILLOUGHBY*

NORTH. Here come the Lords of Ross and Wil-  
loughby,  
Bloody with spurring, fiery-red with haste.

---

47 *As in a soul*] As in ownership of a soul.

BOLING. Welcome, my lords. I wot your love pursues

A banish'd traitor: all my treasury  
Is yet but unfelt thanks, which more enrich'd  
Shall be your love and labour's recompense. 60

ROSS. Your presence makes us rich, most noble lord.

WILLO. And far surmounts our labour to attain it.

BOLING. Evermore thanks, the exchequer of the poor;  
Which, till my infant fortune comes to years,  
Stands for my bounty. But who comes here?

*Enter* BERKELEY

NORTH. It is my Lord of Berkeley, as I guess.

BERK. My Lord of Hereford, my message is to you.

BOLING. My lord, my answer is — to Lancaster; 70  
And I am come to seek that name in England;  
And I must find that title in your tongue,  
Before I make reply to aught you say.

BERK. Mistake me not, my lord; 't is not my meaning  
To raze one title of your honour out:

To you, my lord, I come, what lord you will,  
From the most gracious regent of this land,  
The Duke of York, to know what pricks you on  
To take advantage of the absent time  
And fright our native peace with self-born arms. 80

70 *my answer is — to Lancaster*] my reply is that your message is not  
addressed to my Lord of Hereford, but to the Duke of Lancaster,  
which is my just title.

79 *the absent time*] the time of the king's absence.

80 *self-born arms*] armed men native-born.



*Enter YORK attended*

BOLING. I shall not need transport my words by  
you;  
Here comes his grace in person.

My noble uncle! [*Kneels.*]

YORK. Show me thy humble heart, and not thy  
knee,  
Whose duty is deceiveable and false.

BOLING. My gracious uncle!

YORK. Tut, tut!

Grace me no grace, nor uncle me no uncle:

I am no traitor's uncle; and that word "grace"

In an ungracious mouth is but profane.

Why have those banish'd and forbidden legs

Dared once to touch a dust of England's ground?

But then more "why?" why have they dared to march

So many miles upon her peaceful bosom,

Frighting her pale-faced villages with war

And ostentation of despised arms?

Comest thou because the anointed king is hence?

Why, foolish boy, the king is left behind,

And in my loyal bosom lies his power.

Were I but now the lord of such hot youth

90

87 *Grace . . . uncle*] A familiar construction in Elizabethan writers.

Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, III, v, 151: "Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds."

95 *ostentation of despised arms*] boastful display of a despicable troop of armed men.

99 *the lord of such hot youth*] the owner of such hot youthful blood.

As when brave Gaunt, thy father, and myself 100  
 Rescued the Black Prince, that young Mars of men,  
 From forth the ranks of many thousand French,  
 O, then how quickly should this arm of mine,  
 Now prisoner to the palsy, chastise thee  
 And minister correction to thy fault!

BOLING. My gracious uncle, let me know my fault:  
 On what condition stands it and wherein?

YORK. Even in condition of the worst degree,  
 In gross rebellion and detested treason:  
 Thou art a banish'd man, and here art come 110  
 Before the expiration of thy time,  
 In braving arms against thy sovereign.

BOLING. As I was banish'd, I was banish'd Hereford;  
 But as I come, I come for Lancaster.  
 And, noble uncle, I beseech your grace  
 Look on my wrongs with an indifferent eye:  
 You are my father, for metlinks in you  
 I see old Gaunt alive; O, then, my father,  
 Will you permit that I shall stand condemn'd  
 A wandering vagabond; my rights and royalties 120  
 Pluck'd from my arms perforce and given away  
 To upstart unthrifths? Wherefore was I born?  
 If that my cousin king be King of England,

107 *On what condition . . . wherein?* Of what nature is it, and in what does it consist?

112 *braving arms*] defiant arms. The expression is repeated at line 143, *infra*.

116 *indifferent*] impartial.

120 *royalties*] feudal revenues. Cf. II, i, 190, *supra*, and III, iii, 113, *infra*.

122 *upstart unthrifths*] vulgar spendthrifts.

It must be granted I am Duke of Lancaster.  
You have a son, Aumerle, my noble cousin;  
Had you first died, and he been thus trod down,  
He should have found his uncle Gaunt a father,  
To rouse his wrongs and chase them to the bay.  
I am denied to sue my livery here,  
And yet my letters-patents give me leave: 130  
My father's goods are all distrain'd and sold;  
And these and all are all amiss employ'd.  
What would you have me do? I am a subject,  
And I challenge law: attorneys are denied me;  
And therefore personally I lay my claim  
To my inheritance of free descent.

NORTH. The noble duke hath been too much  
abused.

ROSS. It stands your grace upon to do him right.

WILLO. Base men by his endowments are made  
great.

YORK. My lords of England, let me tell you this: 140  
I have had feeling of my cousin's wrongs  
And labour'd all I could to do him right;  
But in this kind to come, in braving arms,  
Be his own carver and cut out his way,

128 *To rouse . . . bay*] To rouse from their lairs those who do him wrong  
and hunt them to the death. The expressions belong to the technical  
terminology of the chase.

129 *sue my livery*] Cf. II, i, 203, 204, *supra*, and note.

136 *free descent*] direct descent.

138 *It stands your grace upon*] It is your grace's duty, it is incumbent upon  
your grace.

143 *braving arms*] defiant arms. Cf. line 112, *supra*, and note.

To find out right with wrong, it may not be;  
And you that do abet him in this kind  
Cherish rebellion and are rebels all.

NORTH. The noble duke hath sworn his coming is  
But for his own; and for the right of that  
We all have strongly sworn to give him aid; 150  
And let him ne'er see joy that breaks that oath!

YORK. Well, well, I see the issue of these arms:  
I cannot mend it, I must needs confess,  
Because my power is weak and all ill left:  
But if I could, by Him that gave me life,  
I would attach you all and make you stoop  
Unto the sovereign mercy of the king;  
But since I cannot, be it known to you  
I do remain as neuter. So, fare you well;  
Unless you please to enter in the castle 160  
And there repose you for this night.

BOLING. An offer, uncle, that we will accept:  
But we must win your grace to go with us  
To Bristol castle, which they say is held  
By Bushy, Bagot and their complices,  
The caterpillars of the commonwealth,  
Which I have sworn to weed and pluck away.

YORK. It may be I will go with you: but yet I'll  
pause;

156 *attach*] arrest.

166 *caterpillars of the commonwealth*] voracious vermin eating up the state. The phrase was in common use in Elizabethan literature. Cf. the title of Gosson's diatribe against the theatre, 1579: "The *Schoole of Abuse*, containing a plesaunt inuectiue against Poets, Pipers, Plaiers, Jesters and such like *Caterpillers of a Commonwealth*."

For I am loath to break our country's laws.  
 Nor friends nor foes, to me welcome you are: 170  
 Things past redress are now with me past care.  
 [Exeunt.]

## SCENE IV — A CAMP IN WALES

*Enter SALISBURY and a Welsh Captain*

CAP. My Lord of Salisbury, we have stay'd ten days,  
 And hardly kept our countrymen together,  
 And yet we hear no tidings from the king;  
 Therefore we will disperse ourselves: farewell.

SAL. Stay yet another day, thou trusty Welshman:  
 The king reposeth all his confidence in thee.

CAP. 'T is thought the king is dead; we will not stay.  
 The bay-trees in our country are all wither'd,  
 And meteors fright the fixed stars of heaven;  
 The pale-faced moon looks bloody on the earth, 10  
 And lean-look'd prophets whisper fearful change;  
 Rich men look sad and ruffians dance and leap,  
 The one in fear to lose what they enjoy,  
 The other to enjoy by rage and war:  
 These signs forerun the death or fall of kings.

171 *Things . . . care*] Cf. *Wint. Tale*, III, ii, 219–220: “What’s gone  
 and what’s past help Should be past grief.”

8 *The bay-trees . . . wither’d*] This detail is borrowed direct from Holin-  
 shed, 2d edition, 1586–1587, vol. III, p. 496.

14 *The other to enjoy*] The other in hope of enjoying.

15 *or fall*] These words appear only in the First Quarto.

Farewell: our countrymen are gone and fled,  
As well assured Richard their king is dead. [Exit.]

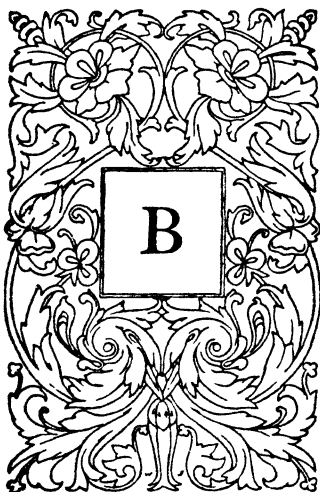
SAL. Ah, Richard, with the eyes of heavy mind  
I see thy glory like a shooting star  
Fall to the base earth from the firmament. 20  
Thy sun sets weeping in the lowly west,  
Witnessing storms to come, woe and unrest:  
Thy friends are fled to wait upon thy foes,  
And crossly to thy good all fortune goes. [Exit.]



ACT THIRD — SCENE I — BRISTOL  
BEFORE THE CASTLE

*Enter BOLINGBROKE, YORK, NORTHUMBERLAND, ROSS, PERCY,  
WILLOUGHBY, with BUSHY and GREEN, prisoners*

BOLINGBROKE



BRING FORTH THESE  
men.

Bushy and Green, I will not vex  
your souls —

Since presently your souls must  
part your bodies —

With too much urging your  
pernicious lives,

For 't were no charity; yet, to  
wash your blood

From off my hands, here in the  
view of men

I will unfold some causes of  
your deaths.

You have misled a prince, a royal king,  
A happy gentleman in blood and lineaments,

3 *part*] part from, leave.

4 *too much urging*] laying too much stress on.

By you unhappied and disfigured clean: 10  
 You have in manner with your sinful hours  
 Made a divorce betwixt his queen and him,  
 Broke the possession of a royal bed  
 And stain'd the beauty of a fair queen's cheeks  
 With tears drawn from her eyes by your foul wrongs.  
 Myself, a prince by fortune of my birth,  
 Near to the king in blood, and near in love  
 Till you did make him misinterpret me,  
 Have stoop'd my neck under your injuries,  
 And sigh'd my English breath in foreign clouds, 20  
 Eating the bitter bread of banishment;  
 Whilst you have fed upon my signories,  
 Dispark'd my parks and fell'd my forest woods,  
 From my own windows torn my household coat,  
 Razed out my imprese, leaving me no sign,  
 Save men's opinions and my living blood,  
 To show the world I am a gentleman.  
 This and much more, much more than twice all this,  
 Condemns you to the death. See them deliver'd over  
 To execution and the hand of death. 30

10 *unhappied . . . clean*] made unfortunate and completely disfigured.  
 11 *in manner*] in a certain degree. There is no historic ground for the statement made in this passage.

23 *Dispark'd my parks*] Destroyed the fences or hedges which enclosed my parks.

24-25 *From my own windows . . . imprese*] Armorial bearings were blazoned in the stained glass windows of great houses, while the furniture and fixtures were decorated with "imprese," the technical name of heraldic devices or emblems, with mottoes attached, by which men of high birth set much store.



BUSHY. More welcome is the stroke of death to me  
Than Bolingbroke to England. Lords, farewell.

GREEN. My comfort is that heaven will take our  
souls  
And plague injustice with the pains of hell.

BOLING. My Lord Northumberland, see them dispatch'd.

[*Exeunt Northumberland and others, with the prisoners.*]

Uncle, you say the queen is at your house ;  
For God's sake, fairly let her be entreated :  
Tell her I send to her my kind commends ;  
Take special care my greetings be deliver'd.

YORK. A gentleman of mine I have dispatch'd 40  
With letters of your love to her at large.

BOLING. Thanks, gentle uncle. Come, lords, away,  
To fight with Glendower and his complices :  
Awhile to work, and after holiday. [*Exeunt.*]

43 *To fight . . . complices*] This abrupt reference to Glendower seems due to a confused reminiscence of Holinshed's *Chronicle*. According to the chronicler, the Welsh leader was with King Richard II at Flint Castle, and was taken prisoner by Bolingbroke, although he had shown no particular sign of hostility to his captor earlier. It was not until Bolingbroke had ascended the throne as Henry IV that Glendower took up arms against him. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, i, 40, *seq.*

## SCENE II—THE COAST OF WALES

## A CASTLE IN VIEW

*Drums: flourish and colours. Enter KING RICHARD, the BISHOP OF CARLISLE, AUMERLE, and Soldiers*

K. RICH. Barkloughly castle call they this at hand?

AUM. Yea, my lord. How brooks your grace the air,  
After your late tossing on the breaking seas?

K. RICH. Needs must I like it well: I weep for joy  
To stand upon my kingdom once again.

Dear earth, I do salute thee with my hand,  
Though rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs:

As a long-parted mother with her child

Plays fondly with her tears and smiles in meeting,

So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my earth,

10

And do thee favours with my royal hands.

Feed not thy sovereign's foe, my gentle earth,

Nor with thy sweets comfort his ravenous sense;

But let thy spiders, that suck up thy venom,

And heavy-gaited toads lie in their way,

Doing annoyance to the treacherous feet

Which with usurping steps do trample thee:

Yield stinging nettles to mine enemies;

And when they from thy bosom pluck a flower,

Guard it, I pray thee, with a lurking adder,

20

Whose double tongue may with a mortal touch

1 *Barkloughly castle*] Holinshed calls this castle "Barclowlie," which seems a misprint for "Hertlowly," the name given it by earlier authorities. "Harlech" was no doubt intended.

Throw death upon thy sovereign's enemies.  
Mock not my senseless conjuration, lords:  
This earth shall have a feeling and these stones  
Prove armed soldiers, ere her native king  
Shall falter under foul rebellion's arms.

CAR. Fear not, my lord: that Power that made you  
king

Hath power to keep you king in spite of all.  
The means that heaven yields must be embraced,  
And not neglected ; else, if heaven would, 30  
And we will not, heaven's offer we refuse,  
The proffer'd means of succour and redress.

AUM. He means, my lord, that we are too remiss;  
Whilst Bolingbroke, through our security,  
Grows strong and great in substance and in power.

K. RICH. Discomfortable cousin ! know'st thou not  
That when the searching eye of heaven is hid,  
Behind the globe, that lights the lower world,  
Then thieves and robbers range abroad unseen  
In murders and in outrage, boldly here ;  
But when from under this terrestrial ball  
He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines  
And darts his light through every guilty hole,  
Then murders, treasons and detested sins,

The cloak of night being pluck'd from off their backs,  
Stand bare and naked, trembling at themselves?  
So when this thief, this traitor, Bolingbroke,  
Who all this while hath revell'd in the night,  
Whilst we were wandering with the antipodes,  
Shall see us rising in our throne, the east, 50  
His treasons will sit blushing in his face,  
Not able to endure the sight of day,  
But self-affrighted tremble at his sin.  
Not all the water in the rough rude sea  
Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;  
The breath of worldly men cannot depose  
The deputy elected by the Lord:  
For every man that Bolingbroke hath press'd  
To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown,  
God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay 60  
A glorious angel: then, if angels fight,  
Weak men must fall, for heaven still guards the right.

*Enter SALISBURY*

Welcome, my lord: how far off lies your power?

SAL. Nor near nor farther off, my gracious lord,  
Than this weak arm: discomfort guides my tongue  
And bids me speak of nothing but despair.  
One day too late, I fear me, noble lord,  
Hath clouded all thy happy days on earth:  
O, call back yesterday, bid time return,

---

55 *balm*] consecrated oil used at a king's consecration. Cf. IV, i, 207,  
*infra*.

58-59 *hath press'd* . . . *steel*] has induced to lift sharp, hurtful steel.

And thou shalt have twelve thousand fighting men ! 70  
To-day, to-day, unhappy day, too late,  
O'erthrows thy joys, friends, fortune and thy state:  
For all the Welshmen, hearing thou wert dead,  
Are gone to Bolingbroke, dispersed and fled.

AUM. Comfort, my liege: why looks your grace so pale?

K. RICH. But now the blood of twenty thousand men  
Did triumph in my face, and they are fled;  
And, till so much blood thither come again,  
Have I not reason to look pale and dead?  
All souls that will be safe, fly from my side, 80  
For time hath set a blot upon my pride.

AUM. Comfort, my liege; remember who you are.

K. RICH. I had forgot myself: am I not king?  
Awake, thou coward majesty! thou sleepest.  
Is not the king's name twenty thousand names?  
Arm, arm, my name! a puny subject strikes  
At thy great glory. Look not to the ground,  
Ye favourites of a king: are we not high?  
High be our thoughts: I know my uncle York  
Hath power enough to serve our turn. But who comes  
here? 90

*Enter SCROOP*

SCROOP. More health and happiness betide my liege  
Than can my care-tuned tongue deliver him!

K. RICH. Mine ear is open and my heart prepared:  
The worst is worldly loss thou canst unfold.  
Say, is my kingdom lost? why, 't was my care;

84 coward] Thus the early Quartos. The Folios read *sluggard*.

And what loss is it to be rid of care?  
 Strives Bolingbroke to be as great as we?  
 Greater he shall not be; if he serve God,  
 We'll serve Him too and be his fellow so:  
 Revolt our subjects? that we cannot mend; 100  
 They break their faith to God as well as us:  
 Cry woe, destruction, ruin and decay;  
 The worst is death, and death will have his day.

SCROOP. Glad am I that your highness is so arm'd  
 To bear the tidings of calamity.  
 Like an unseasonable stormy day,  
 Which makes the silver rivers drown their shores,  
 As if the world were all dissolved to tears,  
 So high above its limits swells the rage  
 Of Bolingbroke, covering your fearful land 110  
 With hard bright steel and hearts harder than steel.  
 White-beards have arm'd their thin and hairless scalps  
 Against thy majesty; boys, with women's voices,  
 Strive to speak big and clap their female joints  
 In stiff unwieldy arms against thy crown:  
 Thy very beadsmen learn to bend their bows  
 Of double-fatal yew against thy state;  
 Yea, distaff-women manage rusty bills  
 Against thy seat: both young and old rebel,  
 And all goes worse than I have power to tell. 120

K. RICH. Too well, too well thou tell'st a tale so ill.

116 *beadsmen*] almsmen, inmates of an almshouse, whose duty it was to pray for their benefactor. Cf. "almsman," III, iii, 150, *infra*.

117 *double-fatal yew*] Not only are the leaves of the yew-tree poisonous, but from the wood such lethal weapons as bows were made.

118 *distaff-women . . . bills*] seamstresses handle rusty battleaxes.

Where is the Earl of Wiltshire? where is Bagot?  
What is become of Bushy? where is Green?  
That they have let the dangerous enemy  
Measure our confines with such peaceful steps?  
If we prevail, their heads shall pay for it:  
I warrant they have made peace with Bolingbroke.

SCROOP. Peace have they made with him indeed, my lord.

K. RICH. O villains, vipers, damn'd without redemption!

Dogs, easily won to fawn on any man! 130  
Snakes, in my heart-blood warm'd, that sting my heart!  
Three Judases, each one thrice worse than Judas!  
Would they make peace? terrible hell make war  
Upon their spotted souls for this offence!

SCROOP. Sweet love, I see, changing his property,  
Turns to the sourest and most deadly hate:  
Again uncure their souls; their peace is made  
With heads, and not with hands: those whom you curse  
Have felt the worst of death's destroying wound,  
And lie full low, graved in the hollow ground. 140

AUM. Is Bushy, Green and the Earl of Wiltshire dead?

SCROOP. Ay, all of them at Bristol lost their heads.

---

132 *Three Judases*] Reference has just been made by the distracted king to *four* supposed traitors, Wiltshire, Bagot, Bushy, and Green, and it seems an oversight to apply to them the numeral *three*. Bagot, however, did not suffer the same fate as the other three (see ll. 140-141, *infra*). He fled to join Richard in Ireland, and was afterwards imprisoned by Bolingbroke in London; see IV, i, 1, *seq.*

135 *his property*] its quality.

AUM. Where is the duke my father with his power?

K. RICH. No matter where; of comfort no man speak;  
Let's talk of graves, of worms and epitaphs;  
Make dust our paper and with rainy eyes  
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth.  
Let's choose executors and talk of wills:  
And yet not so, for what can we bequeath  
Save our deposed bodies to the ground? 150  
Our lands, our lives and all are Bolingbroke's,  
And nothing can we call our own but death,  
And that small model of the barren earth  
Which serves as paste and cover to our bones.  
For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground  
And tell sad stories of the death of kings:  
How some have been deposed; some slain in war;  
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed;  
Some poison'd by their wives; some sleeping kill'd;  
All murder'd: for within the hollow crown 160  
That rounds the mortal temples of a king  
Keeps Death his court, and there the antic sits,  
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,  
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,  
To monarchize, be fear'd and kill with looks,  
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,  
As if this flesh which walls about our life

153 *model*] the mound or mould of the earth which takes the shape of the body buried beneath it.

162 *antic*] buffoon. Cf. *1 Hen. VI*, IV, vii, 18: "Thou *antic death*, which laugh'st us here to scorn." In the old morality plays the clown of the piece was usually called the "antic."

166 *self and vain conceit*] vain self-conceit.



Were brass impregnable, and humour'd thus  
Comes at the last and with a little pin  
Bores through his castle wall, and farewell king! 170  
Cover your heads and mock not flesh and blood  
With solemn reverence: throw away respect,  
Tradition, form and ceremonious duty,  
For you have but mistook me all this while:  
I live with bread like you, feel want,  
Taste grief, need friends: subjected thus,  
How can you say to me, I am a king?

CAR. My lord, wise men ne'er sit and wail their woes,  
But presently prevent the ways to wail.  
To fear the foe, since fear oppresseth strength, 180  
Gives in your weakness strength unto your foe,  
And so your follies fight against yourself.  
Fear, and be slain; no worse can come to fight:  
And fight and die is death destroying death;  
Where fearing dying pays death servile breath.

AUM. My father hath a power; inquire of him,  
And learn to make a body of a limb.

K. RICH. Thou chidest me well: proud Bolingbroke,  
I come  
To change blows with thee for our day of doom.  
This ague fit of fear is over-blown; 190  
An easy task it is to win our own.  
Say, Scroop, where lies our uncle with his power?  
Speak sweetly, man, although thy looks be sour.  
SCROOP. Men judge by the complexion of the sky

183 *to fight*] by fighting.

185 *Where fearing dying*] Whereas to die in fear.

The state and inclination of the day:  
So may you by my dull and heavy eye,

My tongue hath but a heavier tale to say.

I play the torturer, by small and small

To lengthen out the worst that must be spoken:

Your uncle York is join'd with Bolingbroke,

200

And all your northern castles yielded up,

And all your southern gentlemen in arms

Upon his party.

K. RICH. Thou hast said enough.

Beshrew thee, cousin, which didst lead me forth

[*To Aumerle.*]

Of that sweet way I was in to despair!

What say you now? what comfort have we now?

By heaven, I'll hate him everlastingly

That bids me be of comfort any more.

Go to Flint castle: there I'll pine away;

A king, woe's slave, shall kingly woe obey.

210

That power I have, discharge; and let them go

To ear the land that hath some hope to grow,

For I have none: let no man speak again

To alter this, for counsel is but vain.

AUM. My liege, one word.

K. RICH. He does me double wrong.

That wounds me with the flatteries of his tongue.

Discharge my followers: let them hence away,

From Richard's night to Bolingbroke's fair day.

[*Exeunt.*]

---

212 *To ear*] To till.

## SCENE III — WALES

## BEFORE FLINT CASTLE

*Enter, with drum and colours, BOLINGBROKE, YORK, NORTH-  
UMBERLAND, Attendants, and forces*

BOLING. So that by this intelligence we learn  
The Welshmen are dispersed; and Salisbury  
Is gone to meet the king, who lately landed  
With some few private friends upon this coast.

NORTH. The news is very fair and good, my lord:  
Richard not far from hence hath hid his head.

YORK. It would beseem the Lord Northumberland  
To say "King Richard": alack the heavy day  
When such a sacred king should hide his head.

NORTH. Your grace mistakes; only to be brief, 10  
Left I his title out.

YORK. The time hath been,  
Would you have been so brief with him, he would  
Have been so brief with you, to shorten you,  
For taking so the head, your whole head's length.

BOLING. Mistake not, uncle, further than you should.

YORK. Take not, good cousin, further than you  
should,  
Lest you mistake the heavens are o'er our heads.

BOLING. I know it, uncle, and oppose not myself  
Against their will. But who comes here?

14 *For taking so the head*] For acting with so little restraint, for taking undue liberties; the expression quibbles on Bolingbroke's seizure of the crown.

*Enter PERCY*

Welcome, Harry: what, will not this castle yield? 20

PERCY. The castle royally is mann'd, my lord,  
Against thy entrance.

BOLING. Royally!  
Why, it contains no king?

PERCY. Yes, my good lord,  
It doth contain a king; King Richard lies  
Within the limits of yon lime and stone:  
And with him are the Lord Aumerle, Lord Salisbury,  
Sir Stephen Scroop, besides a clergyman  
Of holy reverence; who, I cannot learn.

NORTH. O, belike it is the Bishop of Carlisle. 30

BOLING. Noble lords,  
Go to the rude ribs of that ancient castle;  
Through brazen trumpet send the breath of parley  
Into his ruin'd ears, and thus deliver:

Henry Bolingbroke

On both his knees doth kiss King Richard's hand  
And sends allegiance and true faith of heart  
To his most royal person; hither come  
Even at his feet to lay my arms and power,  
Provided that my banishment repeal'd 40  
And lands restored again be freely granted:  
If not, I'll use the advantage of my power  
And lay the summer's dust with showers of blood  
Rain'd from the wounds of slaughter'd Englishmen:  
The which, how far off from the mind of Bolingbroke  
It is, such crimson tempest should bedrench  
The fresh green lap of fair King Richard's land,

My stooping duty tenderly shall show.  
 Go, signify as much, while here we march  
 Upon the grassy carpet of this plain. 50  
 Let's march without the noise of threatening drum,  
 That from this castle's tatter'd battlements  
 Our fair appointments may be well perused.  
 Methinks King Richard and myself should meet  
 With no less terror than the elements  
 Of fire and water, when their thundering shock  
 At meeting tears the cloudy cheeks of heaven.  
 Be he the fire, I'll be the yielding water:  
 The rage be his, whilst on the earth I rain  
 My waters; on the earth, and not on him. 60  
 March on, and mark King Richard how he looks.

*Parle without, and answer within. Then a flourish. Enter on the walls, KING RICHARD, the BISHOP OF CARLISLE, AUMERLE, SCROOP, and SALISBURY*

See, see, King Richard doth himself appear,  
 As doth the blushing discontented sun  
 From out the fiery portal of the east,  
 When he perceives the envious clouds are bent  
 To dim his glory and to stain the track  
 Of his bright passage to the occident.

YORK. Yet looks he like a king: behold, his eye,  
 As bright as is the eagle's, lightens forth

---

52 *tatter'd*] ragged, weather-beaten. Thus the later Quartos and the Folios. The two earliest Quartos read *tottered*, which is no uncommon form of the word. Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, Ind., 35: "this worm-eaten hold of *ragged* stone," and *infra*, V, v, 21: "*ragged* prison walls."

53 *appointments . . . perused*] accoutrements . . . marked.

Controlling majesty: alack, alack, for woe, 70  
That any harm should stain so fair a show!

K. RICH. We are amazed; and thus long have we stood  
To watch the fearful bending of thy knee, [*To North.*  
Because we thought ourself thy lawful king:

And if we be, how dare thy joints forget  
To pay their awful duty to our presence?  
If we be not, show us the hand of God  
That hath dismiss'd us from our stewardship;  
For well we know, no hand of blood and bone 80  
Can gripe the sacred handle of our sceptre,  
Unless he do profane, steal, or usurp.

And though you think that all, as you have done,  
Have torn their souls by turning them from us,  
And we are barren and bereft of friends;  
Yet know, my master, God omnipotent,  
Is mustering in his clouds on our behalf  
Armies of pestilence; and they shall strike  
Your children yet unborn and unbegot,  
That lift your vassal hands against my head,  
And threat the glory of my precious crown. 90  
Tell Bolingbroke — for yond methinks he stands —  
That every stride he makes upon my land  
Is dangerous treason: he is come to open  
The purple testament of bleeding war;

76 *awful duty*] reverential duty, due reverence.

83 *torn . . . us*] wounded their own souls by withdrawing them from allegiance to us.

94 *The purple . . . war*] The blood-stained record of war. Cf. Kyd's *Jerónimo*, Part I, II, ii, 87: "Then I unclasp the *purple leaves of war*."

But ere the crown he looks for live in peace,  
 Ten thousand bloody crowns of mothers' sons  
 Shall ill become the flower of England's face,  
 Change the complexion of her maid-pale peace  
 To scarlet indignation, and bedew  
 Her pastures' grass with faithful English blood. 100

NORTH. The king of heaven forbid our lord the king  
 Should so with civil and uncivil arms  
 Be rush'd upon! Thy thrice noble cousin  
 Harry Bolingbroke doth humbly kiss thy hand;  
 And by the honourable tomb he swears,  
 That stands upon your royal grandsire's bones,  
 And by the royalties of both your bloods,  
 Currents that spring from one most gracious head,  
 And by the buried hand of warlike Gaunt,  
 And by the worth and honour of himself, 110  
 Comprising all that may be sworn or said,  
 His coming hither hath no further scope  
 Than for his lineal royalties, and to beg  
 Enfranchisement immediate on his knees:  
 Which on thy royal party granted once,  
 His glittering arms he will commend to rust,  
 His barbed steeds to stables, and his heart

97 *the flower of England's face*] the flowering surface of England.

102 *with civil and uncivil arms*] with arms at once domestic (or intestine),  
 and rough or turbulent.

113 *lineal royalties*] hereditary (feudal) revenues. Cf. II, i, 190, and II,  
 iii, 120, *supra*.

114 *Enfranchisement*] Release or restitution.

115 *party*] part.

117 *barbed steeds*] barded steeds, armour-clad horses.

To faithful service of your majesty.

This swears he, as he is a prince, is just;

And, as I am a gentleman, I credit him. 120

K. RICH. Northumberland, say thus the king returns:

His noble cousin is right welcome hither;

And all the number of his fair demands

Shall be accomplish'd without contradiction:

With all the gracious utterance thou hast,

Speak to his gentle hearing kind commends.

We do debase ourselves, cousin, do we not, [*To Aumerle*.

To look so poorly and to speak so fair?

Shall we call back Northumberland, and send

Defiance to the traitor, and so die? 130

AUM. No, good my lord; let's fight with gentle words,

Till time lend friends and friends their helpful swords.

K. RICH. O God, O God! that e'er this tongue of  
mine,

That laid the sentence of dread banishment

On yon proud man, should take it off again

With words of sooth! O that I were as great

As is my grief, or lesser than my name!

Or that I could forget what I have been,

Or not remember what I must be now!

Swell'st thou, proud heart? I'll give thee scope to beat,  
Since foes have scope to beat both thee and me. 141

AUM. Northumberland comes back from Bolingbroke.

K. RICH. What must the king do now? must he  
submit?

The king shall do it: must he be deposed?

---

136 *sooth*] flattery or conciliation.



The king shall be contented: must he lose  
 The name of king? o' God's name, let it go:  
 I'll give my jewels for a set of beads,  
 My gorgeous palace for a hermitage,  
 My gay apparel for an almsman's gown,  
 My figured goblets for a dish of wood, 150  
 My sceptre for a palmer's walking-staff,  
 My subjects for a pair of carved saints,  
 And my large kingdom for a little grave,  
 A little little grave, an obscure grave;  
 Or I'll be buried in the king's highway,  
 Some way of common trade, where subjects' feet  
 May hourly trample on their sovereign's head;  
 For on my heart they tread now whilst I live;  
 And buried once, why not upon my head?  
 Aumerle, thou weep'st, my tender-hearted cousin! 160  
 We'll make foul weather with despised tears;  
 Our sighs and they shall lodge the summer corn,  
 And make a dearth in this revolting land.  
 Or shall we play the wantons with our woes,  
 And make some pretty match with shedding tears?  
 As thus, to drop them still upon one place,  
 Till they have fretted us a pair of graves  
 Within the earth; and, therein laid, — there lies

149 *My gay apparel . . . gown*] King Richard was famous for the extravagance of his dress. For "almsman" cf. "beadsman," III, ii, 116, *supra*.

152 *pair*] set.

156 *of common trade*] of common resort.

162 *lodge*] lay flat. The word is still in provincial use in this sense.

164 *play the wantons*] behave like children.

Two kinsmen digg'd their graves with weeping eyes.  
Would not this ill do well? Well, well, I see . . . 170  
I talk but idly, and you laugh at me.

Most mighty prince, my Lord Northumberland,  
What says King Bolingbroke? will his majesty  
Give Richard leave to live till Richard die?

You make a leg, and Bolingbroke says ay.

NORTH. My lord, in the base court he doth attend  
To speak with you; may it please you to come down.

K. RICH. Down, down I come; like glistening  
Phaeton,

Wanting the manage of unruly jades.

In the base court? Base court, where kings grow base,  
To come at traitors' calls and do them grace. 181

In the base court? Come down? Down, court! down,  
king!

For night-owls shriek where mounting larks should sing.  
[*Exeunt from above.*]

BOLING. What says his majesty?

NORTH. Sorrow and grief of heart  
Makes him speak fondly, like a frantic man:  
Yet he is come.

*Enter KING RICHARD and his attendants below*

BOLING. Stand all apart,  
And show fair duty to his majesty. [He kneels down.  
My gracious lord, —

175 *make a leg*] make a bow or courtesy.

176 *the base court*] the outer or lower court of a castle.

179 *Wanting the manage of*] Without skill to control.

185 *fondly . . . man*] foolishly, like a madman.

K. RICH. Fair cousin, you debase your princely knee  
To make the base earth proud with kissing it: 191  
Me rather had my heart might feel your love  
Than my displeased eye see your courtesy.  
Up, cousin, up; your heart is up, I know,  
Thus high at least, although your knee be low.

BOLING. My gracious lord, I come but for mine own.

K. RICH. Your own is yours, and I am yours, and all.

BOLING. So far be mine, my most redoubted lord,  
As my true service shall deserve your love.

K. RICH. Well you deserve: they well deserve to  
have, 200

That know the strong'st and surest way to get.  
Uncle, give me your hands: nay, dry your eyes;  
Tears show their love, but want their remedies.  
Cousin, I am too young to be your father,  
Though you are old enough to be my heir.  
What you will have, I'll give, and willing too;  
For do we must what force will have us do.  
Set on towards London, cousin, is it so?

BOLING. Yea, my good lord.

K. RICH. Then I must not say no.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

---

195 *Thus high at least*] The king here touches his own head.

204 *too young . . . father*] Bolingbroke and King Richard were both of precisely the same age, — thirty-three, — both having been born in 1366.

## SCENE IV — LANGLEY

## THE DUKE OF YORK'S GARDEN

*Enter the QUEEN and two Ladies*

QUEEN. What sport shall we devise here in this garden,  
To drive away the heavy thought of care?

LADY. Madam, we'll play at bowls.

QUEEN. 'T will make me think the world is full of rubs,  
And that my fortune runs against the bias.

LADY. Madam, we'll dance.

QUEEN. My legs can keep no measure in delight,  
When my poor heart no measure keeps in grief:  
Therefore, no dancing, girl; some other sport.

LADY. Madam, we'll tell tales.

10

QUEEN. Of sorrow or of joy?

LADY. Of either, madam.

QUEEN. Of neither, girl:  
For if of joy, being altogether wanting,  
It doth remember me the more of sorrow;

4-5 *rubs . . . bias*] technical terms in the game of bowls. A "rub" is an impediment to the progress of the bowl due to inequality of the ground. The "bias" is the weight inserted in one side of the ball in order to deflect its course from a straight direction.

7-8 *measure . . . measure*] In the first case the word is used in the sense of "a stately dance," and in the second case it means "moderation."

11 *joy*] Rowe's emendation of the original reading *griefe*.

Or if of grief, being altogether had,  
It adds more sorrow to my want of joy:  
For what I have I need not to repeat;  
And what I want it boots not to complain.

LADY. Madam, I'll sing.

QUEEN. 'Tis well that thou hast cause;  
But thou shouldst please me better, wouldst thou weep. 20

LADY. I could weep, madam, would it do you good.

QUEEN. And I could sing, would weeping do me  
good,  
And never borrow any tear of thee.

*Enter a Gardener, and two Servants*

But stay, here come the gardeners:  
Let's step into the shadow of these trees.  
My wretchedness unto a row of pins,  
They'll talk of state; for every one doth so  
Against a change; woe is forerun with woe.

*[Queen and Ladies retire.]*

GARD. Go, bind thou up yon dangling apricocks,  
Which, like unruly children, make their sire 30  
Stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight:  
Give some supportance to the bending twigs.  
Go thou, and like an executioner,  
Cut off the heads of too fast growing sprays,  
That look too lofty in our commonwealth:  
All must be even in our government.

28 *Against a change: woe . . . woe*] In anticipation of a revolution.

Calamity is preceded by calamity.

29 *apricocks*] apricots.

You thus employ'd, I will go root away  
The noisome weeds, which without profit suck  
The soil's fertility from wholesome flowers.

SERV. Why should we in the compass of a pale 40  
Keep law and form and due proportion,  
Showing, as in a model, our firm estate,  
When our sea-walled garden, the whole land,  
Is full of weeds; her fairest flowers choked up,  
Her fruit-trees all unpruned, her hedges ruin'd,  
Her knots disorder'd, and her wholesome herbs  
Swarming with caterpillars?

GARD. Hold thy peace:  
He that hath suffer'd this disorder'd spring  
Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf:  
The weeds which his broad-spreading leaves did shelter, 50  
That seem'd in eating him to hold him up,  
Are pluck'd up root and all by Bolingbroke;  
I mean the Earl of Wiltshire, Bushy, Green.

SERV. What, are they dead?

GARD. They are; and Bolingbroke  
Hath seized the wasteful king. O, what pity is it  
That he had not so trimm'd and dress'd his land  
As we this garden! We at time of year  
Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit-trees,  
Lest, being over-proud in sap and blood,  
With too much riches it confound itself: 60  
Had he done so to great and growing men,

40 *pale*] paling, enclosure.

46 *knots*] flower-beds of complicated pattern. Cf. *L. L. L.*, I, i, 236:  
"curious-knotted garden."

They might have lived to bear and he to taste  
Their fruits of duty: superfluous branches  
We lop away, that bearing boughs may live:  
Had he done so, himself had borne the crown,  
Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down.

SERV. What, think you then the king shall be deposed?

GARD. Depress'd he is already, and deposed  
'T is doubt he will be: letters came last night  
To a dear friend of the good Duke of York's, 70  
That tell black tidings.

QUEEN. O, I am press'd to death through want of  
speaking! [Coming forward.  
Thou, old Adam's likeness, set to dress this garden,  
How dares thy harsh rude tongue sound this displeasing  
news?

What Eve, what serpent, hath suggested thee  
To make a second fall of cursed man?  
Why dost thou say King Richard is deposed?  
Darest thou, thou little better thing than earth,  
Divine his downfall? Say, where, when, and how,  
Camest thou by this ill tidings? speak, thou wretch. 80

GARD. Pardon me, madam: little joy have I  
To breathe this news; yet what I say is true.  
King Richard, he is in the mighty hold  
Of Bolingbroke: their fortunes both are weigh'd:  
In your lord's scale is nothing but himself,  
And some few vanities that make him light;

72 *press'd to death*] the extreme torture to which persons accused of felony  
and refusing to plead were subjected.

75 *suggested*] prompted, tempted.

But in the balance of great Bolingbroke,  
Besides himself, are all the English peers,  
And with that odds he weighs King Richard down.  
Post you to London, and you will find it so; 90  
I speak no more than every one doth know.

QUEEN. Nimble mischance, that art so light of foot,  
Doth not thy embassy belong to me,  
And am I last that knows it? O, thou think'st  
To serve me last, that I may longest keep  
Thy sorrow in my breast. Come, ladies, go,  
To meet at London London's king in woe.  
What, was I born to this, that my sad look  
Should grace the triumph of great Bolingbroke?  
Gardener, for telling me these news of woe, 100  
Pray God the plants thou graft'st may never grow.

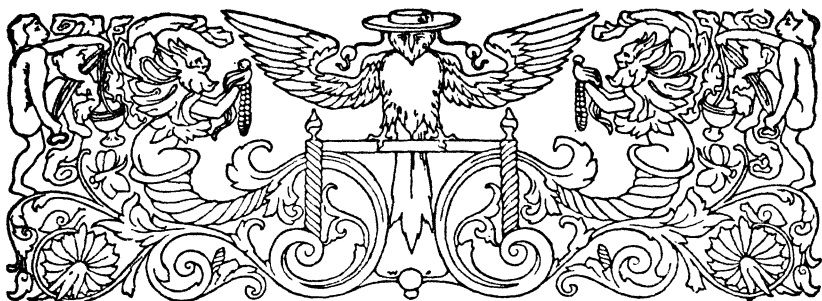
[*Exeunt Queen and Ladies.*]

GARD. Poor queen! so that thy state might be no  
worse,

I would my skill were subject to thy curse.  
Here did she fall a tear; here in this place  
I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace:  
Rue, even for ruth, here shortly shall be seen,  
In the remembrance of a weeping queen. [*Exeunt.*]

105 *herb of grace*] a popular name of the shrub rue, on which the Queen mournfully quibbles. "Grace" here means "repentance," and the verb "to rue" was common in the sense of "to repent." Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, v, 181-182: "there's rue for you; . . . we may call it *herb-grace* o' Sundays."



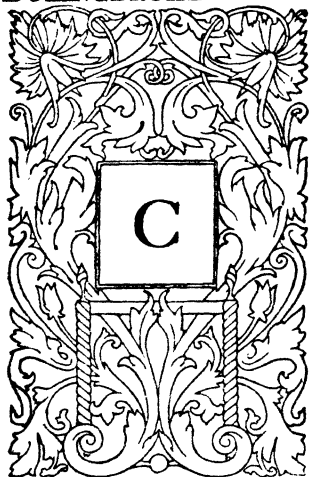


## ACT FOURTH — SCENE I

### WESTMINSTER HALL

*Enter as to the Parliament, BOLINGBROKE, AUMERLE, NORTHUMBERLAND, PERCY, FITZWATER, SURREY, the BISHOP OF CARLISLE, the ABBOT OF WESTMINSTER, and another Lord, Herald, Officers, and BAGOT*

**BOLINGBROKE**



**ALL FORTH BAGOT.**

Now, Bagot, freely speak thy mind;

What thou dost know of noble Gloucester's death;

Who wrought it with the king,  
and who perform'd  
The bloody office of his timeless end.

**BAGOT.** Then set before my face the Lord Aumerle.

**BOLING.** Cousin, stand forth,  
and look upon that man.

**BAGOT.** My Lord Aumerle, I know your daring tongue

<sup>1</sup> *Call forth Bagot*] Shakespeare here combines the proceedings of two Parliaments, one meeting on September 30, 1399, to decree the depo-

Scorns to unsay what once it hath deliver'd.  
In that dead time when Gloucester's death was plotted, fo  
I heard you say, "Is not my arm of length,  
That reacheth from the restful English court  
As far as Calais, to mine uncle's head?"  
Amongst much other talk, that very time,  
I heard you say that you had rather refuse  
The offer of an hundred thousand crowns  
Than Bolingbroke's return to England;  
Adding withal, how blest this land would be  
In this your cousin's death.

AUM. Princes and noble lords,  
What answer shall I make to this base man? 20  
Shall I so much dishonour my fair stars,  
On equal terms to give him chastisement?  
Either I must, or have mine honour soil'd  
With the attainder of his slanderous lips.  
There is my gage, the manual seal of death,  
That marks thee out for hell: I say, thou liest,  
And will maintain what thou hast said is false

sition of King Richard, and the other meeting on October 6 following, after Bolingbroke's accession to the throne. It was in the later Parliament that Bagot was brought from prison to bear witness against Aumerle. King Richard was absent from both assemblies.

4-5 *Who wrought . . . timeless end*] Who worked on the king to win his approval, and who performed the bloody office of bringing about Gloucester's untimely end.

10 *dead*] fatal.

12 *restful*] peaceful.

21 *my fair stars*] stars that attended my birth and endowed me with high rank; an astrological allusion.

25 *the manual seal of death*] the death-warrant.

In thy heart-blood, though being all too base  
To stain the temper of my knightly sword.

BOLING. Bagot, forbear; thou shalt not take it up. 30

AUM. Excepting one, I would he were the best  
In all this presence that hath moved me so.

FITZ. If that thy valour stand on sympathy,  
There is my gage, Aumerle, in gage to thine:  
By that fair sun which shows me where thou stand'st,  
I heard thee say, and vauntingly thou spakest it,  
That thou wert cause of noble Gloucester's death.  
If thou deny'st it twenty times, thou liest;  
And I will turn thy falsehood to thy heart,  
Where it was forged, with my rapier's point. 40

AUM. Thou dardest not, coward, live to see that day.

FITZ. Now, by my soul, I would it were this hour.

AUM. Fitzwater, thou art damn'd to hell for this.

PERCY. Aumerle, thou liest; his honour is as true  
In this appeal as thou art all unjust;  
And that thou art so, there I throw my gage,  
To prove it on thee to the extremest point  
Of mortal breathing: seize it, if thou dardest.

AUM. An if I do not, may my hands rot off,  
And never brandish more revengeful steel 50  
Over the glittering helmet of my foe!

ANOTHER LORD. I task the earth to the like, for-  
sworn Aumerle;  
And spur thee on with full as many lies

33 *stand on sympathy*] depend on (your foe's) equality of rank.

52-59 *I task . . . as you*] These lines, which are omitted from the  
Folios, appear in the first four Quartos.

52 *task*] Thus the first Quarto, for which the second, third, and fourth

As may be holloa'd in thy treacherous ear  
 From sun to sun: there is my honour's pawn;  
 Engage it to the trial, if thou darest.

AUM. Who sets me else? by heaven, I'll throw at all:  
 I have a thousand spirits in one breast,  
 To answer twenty thousand such as you.

SURREY. My Lord Fitzwater, I do remember well 60  
 The very time Aumerle and you did talk.

FITZ. 'T is very true: you were in presence then;  
 And you can witness with me this is true.

SURREY. As false, by heaven, as heaven itself is true.

FITZ. Surrey, thou liest.

SURREY. Dishonourable boy!  
 That lie shall lie so heavy on my sword,  
 That it shall render vengeance and revenge,  
 Till thou the lie-giver and that lie do lie  
 In earth as quiet as thy father's skull:  
 In proof whereof, there is my honour's pawn; 70  
 Engage it to the trial, if thou darest.

FITZ. How fondly dost thou spur a forward horse!  
 If I dare eat, or drink, or breathe, or live,  
 I dare meet Surrey in a wilderness,

in error substitute *take*. The meaning is, "I charge the earth with the like weight" (of the gage which I now throw down).

55 *From sun to sun*] From sunrise to sunset; Capell's emendation of the unintelligible Quarto reading *From sinne to sinne*.

57 *Who sets me else?*] Who else challenges me? The verb "set," *i. e.*, "set stakes," is a technical term in dice-playing.

62 *in presence*] present.

65 *boy*] used as a term of contempt. Fitzwater was thirty-one years old.

74 *in a wilderness*] all alone, in a place where no help can be had.

And spit upon him, whilst I say he lies,  
And lies, and lies: there is my bond of faith,  
To tie thee to my strong correction.  
As I intend to thrive in this new world,  
Aumerle is guilty of my true appeal:  
Besides, I heard the banish'd Norfolk say, 80  
That thou, Aumerle, didst send two of thy men  
To execute the noble duke at Calais.

AUM. Some honest Christian trust me with a gage,  
That Norfolk lies: here do I throw down this,  
If he may be repeal'd, to try his honour.

BOLING. These differences shall all rest under gage  
Till Norfolk be repeal'd: repeal'd he shall be,  
And, though mine enemy, restored again  
To all his lands and signories: when he's return'd,  
Against Aumerle we will enforce his trial. 90

CAR. That honourable day shall ne'er be seen.  
Many a time hath banish'd Norfolk fought  
For Jesu Christ in glorious Christian field,  
Streaming the ensign of the Christian cross  
Against black pagans, Turks, and Saracens;  
And toil'd with works of war, retired himself  
To Italy; and there at Venice gave  
His body to that pleasant country's earth,  
And his pure soul unto his captain Christ,  
Under whose colours he had fought so long. 100

78 *this new world*] the new state of affairs which Bolingbroke's reign inaugurates.

79 *true appeal*] just accusation.

85 *repeal'd*] recalled. Cf. II, ii, 49, *supra*.

BOLING. Why, bishop, is Norfolk dead?

CAR. As surely as I live, my lord.

BOLING. Sweet peace conduct his sweet soul to the  
bosom

Of good old Abraham! Lords appellants,  
Your differences shall all rest under gage  
Till we assign you to your days of trial.

*Enter YORK, attended*

YORK. Great Duke of Lancaster, I come to thee  
From plume-pluck'd Richard; who with willing  
soul

Adopts thee heir, and his high sceptre yields  
To the possession of thy royal hand: 110  
Ascend his throne, descending now from him;  
And long live Henry, fourth of that name!

BOLING. In God's name, I'll ascend the regal throne.

CAR. Marry, God forbid!

Worst in this royal presence may I speak,  
Yet best beseeming me to speak the truth.  
Would God that any in this noble presence  
Were enough noble to be upright judge  
Of noble Richard! then true noblesse would  
Learn him forbearance from so foul a wrong. 120  
What subject can give sentence on his king?  
And who sits here that is not Richard's subject?  
Thieves are not judged but they are by to hear,

116 *Yet . . . truth]* Yet it befits me best (as a servant of God) to  
speak the truth.

Although apparent guilt be seen in them ;  
And shall the figure of God's majesty,  
His captain, steward, deputy elect,  
Anointed, crowned, planted many years,  
Be judged by subject and inferior breath,  
And he himself not present ? O, forfend it, God,  
That in a Christian climate souls refined 130  
Should show so heinous, black, obscene a deed !  
I speak to subjects, and a subject speaks,  
Stirr'd up by God, thus boldly for his king.  
My Lord of Hereford here, whom you call king,  
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's king :  
And if you crown him, let me prophesy ;  
The blood of English shall manure the ground,  
And future ages groan for this foul act ;  
Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,  
And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars 140  
Shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound ;  
Disorder, horror, fear and mutiny  
Shall here inhabit, and this land be call'd  
The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls.  
O, if you raise this house against this house,  
It will the woefullest division prove  
That ever fell upon this cursed earth.  
Prevent it, resist it, let it not be so,  
Lest child, child's children, cry against you "woe !"   
NORTH. Well have you argued, sir ; and, for your  
pains, 150  
Of capital treason we arrest you here.

---

124 *apparent*] manifest.

My Lord of Westminster, be it your charge  
To keep him safely till his day of trial.

May it please you, lords, to grant the commons' suit?

BOLING. Fetch hither Richard, that in common view  
He may surrender; so we shall proceed  
Without suspicion.

YORK. I will be his conduct. [Exit.

BOLING. Lords, you that here are under our arrest,  
Procure your sureties for your days of answer.  
Little are we beholding to your love, 160  
And little look'd for at your helping hands.

*Re-enter YORK, with RICHARD, and Officers bearing  
the regalia*

K. RICH. Alack, why am I sent for to a king,  
Before I have shook off the regal thoughts  
Wherewith I reign'd? I hardly yet have learn'd  
To insinuate, flatter, bow, and bend my limbs:  
Give sorrow leave awhile to tutor me  
To this submission. Yet I well remember  
The favours of these men: were they not mine?  
Did they not sometime cry "all hail!" to me?  
So Judas did to Christ: but he, in twelve, 170  
Found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand, none.

154-318 *May it please you . . . true king's fall*] All these lines were omitted in the first and second Quartos out of respect, it is said, for the susceptibilities of Queen Elizabeth, who disliked the presentation on the stage of the dethronement of one of her predecessors. The passage was printed for the first time in the third Quarto of 1608, and reappears in all subsequent editions.

168 *favours*] features.



God save the king! Will no man say amen?  
Am I both priest and clerk? well then, amen.  
God save the king! although I be not he;  
And yet, amen. If heaven do think him me.  
To do what service am I sent for hither?

YORK. To do that office of thine own good will  
Which tired majesty did make thee offer,  
The resignation of thy state and crown  
To Henry Bolingbroke. 180

K. RICH. Give me the crown. Here, cousin, seize  
the crown;

Here cousin;  
On this side my hand, and on that side yours.  
Now is this golden crown like a deep well  
That owes two buckets, filling one another,  
The emptier ever dancing in the air,  
The other down, unseen and full of water:  
That bucket down and full of tears am I,  
Drinking my griefs, whilst you mount up on high.

BOLING. I thought you had been willing to resign. 190

K. RICH. My crown I am; but still my griefs are  
mine:

You may my glories and my state depose,  
But not my griefs; still am I king of those.

BOLING. Part of your cares you give me with your  
crown.

K. RICH. Your cares set up do not pluck my cares  
down.

---

185 *owes . . . another*] owns or possesses two buckets, filling or being  
filled alternately.

My care is loss of care, by old care done;  
Your care is gain of care, by new care won:  
The cares I give, I have, though given away;  
They tend the crown, yet still with me they stay.

BOLING. Are you contented to resign the crown? 200

K. RICH. Ay, no; no, ay; for I must nothing be;  
Therefore no no, for I resign to thee.  
Now mark me, how I will undo myself:  
I give this heavy weight from off my head  
And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,  
The pride of kingly sway from out my heart;  
With mine own tears I wash away my balm,  
With mine own hands I give away my crown,  
With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,  
With mine own breath release all duty's rites: 210  
All pomp and majesty I do forswear;  
My manors, rents, revenues I forgo;  
My acts, decrees, and statutes I deny:  
God pardon all oaths that are broke to me!  
God keep all vows unbroke that swear to thee!  
Make me, that nothing have, with nothing grieved,  
And thou with all pleased, that hast all achieved!  
Long mayst thou live in Richard's seat to sit,

196-197 *My care . . . won*] The speaker means that his grief is due to his deprivation of his old responsibilities of kingship after wearing anxieties; while Bolingbroke's trouble is due to his acquisition, at the cost of much recent energy, of royal responsibilities for the first time.

207 *my balm*] the consecrated oil used at the king's coronation. Cf. III, ii, 55, *supra*.

210 *duty's rites*] ceremonial observances which subjects owe their sovereign.

And soon lie Richard in an earthy pit!  
God save King Harry, unking'd Richard says, 220  
And send him many years of sunshine days!  
What more remains?

NORTH. No more, but that you read  
These accusations and these grievous crimes,  
Committed by your person and your followers  
Against the state and profit of this land;  
That, by confessing them, the souls of men  
May deem that you are worthily deposed.

K. RICH. Must I do so? and must I ravel out  
My weaved-up folly? Gentle Northumberland,  
If thy offences were upon record, 230  
Would it not shame thee in so fair a troop  
To read a lecture of them? If thou wouldst,  
There shouldst thou find one heinous article,  
Containing the deposing of a king  
And cracking the strong warrant of an oath,  
Mark'd with a blot, damn'd in the book of heaven:  
Nay, all of you that stand and look upon,  
Whilst that my wretchedness doth bait myself,  
Though some of you with Pilate wash your hands,  
Showing an outward pity; yet you Pilates 240  
Have here deliver'd me to my sour cross,  
And water cannot wash away your sin.

NORTH. My lord, dispatch; read o'er these articles.

K. RICH. Mine eyes are full of tears, I cannot see:  
And yet salt water blinds them not so much

237 *look upon*] look on as spectators.

238 *bait*] harass, torment. Cf. "bear-baiting."

But they can see a sort of traitors here.  
Nay, if I turn mine eyes upon myself,  
I find myself a traitor with the rest;  
For I have given here my soul's consent  
To undeck the pompous body of a king;  
Made glory base and sovereignty a slave,  
Proud majesty a subject, state a peasant.

250

NORTH. My lord, —

K. RICH. No lord of thine, thou haught insulting  
man,

Nor no man's lord; I have no name, no title,  
No, not that name was given me at the font,  
But 't is usurp'd: alack the heavy day,  
That I have worn so many winters out,  
And know not now what name to call myself!

260

O that I were a mockery king of snow,  
Standing before the sun of Bolingbroke,  
To melt myself away in water-drops!  
Good king, great king, and yet not greatly good,  
An if my word be sterling yet in England,  
Let it command a mirror hither straight,  
That it may show me what a face I have,  
Since it is bankrupt of his majesty.

BOLING. Go some of you and fetch a looking-glass.

*[Exit an attendant.]*

NORTH. Read o'er this paper while the glass doth  
come.

K. RICH. Fiend, thou torment'st me ere I come to  
hell!

270

---

246 *sort*] pack or company.

BOLING. Urge it no more, my Lord Northumberland.

NORTH. The commons will not then be satisfied.

K. RICH. They shall be satisfied: I'll read enough,  
When I do see the very book indeed  
Where all my sins are writ, and that's myself.

*Re-enter Attendant, with a glass*

Give me the glass, and therein will I read.  
No deeper wrinkles yet? hath sorrow struck  
So many blows upon this face of mine,  
And made no deeper wounds? O flattering glass,  
Like to my followers in prosperity, 280  
Thou dost beguile me! Was this face the face  
That every day under his household roof  
Did keep ten thousand men? was this the face  
That, like the sun, did make beholders wink?  
Was this the face that faced so many follies,  
And was at last out-faced by Bolingbroke?  
A brittle glory shineth in this face:  
As brittle as the glory is the face;

*[Dashes the glass against the ground.]*

For there it is, crack'd in a hundred shivers.  
Mark, silent king, the moral of this sport, 280  
How soon my sorrow hath destroy'd my face.

BOLING. The shadow of your sorrow hath destroy'd  
The shadow of your face.

K. RICH. Say that again.  
The shadow of my sorrow! ha! let's see:

285-286 *faced . . . out-faced*] countenanced . . . put out of countenance.

'T is very true, my grief lies all within;  
And these external manners of laments  
Are merely shadows to the unseen grief,  
That swells with silence in the tortured soul;  
There lies the substance: and I thank thee, king,  
For thy great bounty, that not only givest 300  
Me cause to wail, but teachest me the way  
How to lament the cause. I'll beg one boon,  
And then be gone and trouble you no more.  
Shall I obtain it?

BOLING. Name it, fair cousin.

K. RICH. "Fair cousin"? I am greater than a king:  
For when I was a king, my flatterers  
Were then but subjects; being now a subject,  
I have a king here to my flatterer.  
Being so great, I have no need to beg.

BOLING. Yet ask. 310

K. RICH. And shall I have?

BOLING. You shall.

K. RICH. Then give me leave to go.

BOLING. Whither?

K. RICH. Whither you will, so I were from your  
sights.

BOLING. Go, some of you convey him to the Tower.

K. RICH. O, good! convey? conveyers are you all,  
That rise thus nimble by a true king's fall.

[*Exeunt King Richard, some Lords, and a Guard.*]

---

317 *convey? conveyers*] "convey" and "conveyers" were colloquial euphemisms for "steal" and "thieves." Cf. *M. Wives*, I, iii, 27, 28:  
"‘Convey,’ the wise it call. ‘Steal!’ foh! a fico for the phrase!"

BOLING. On Wednesday next we solemnly set down  
Our coronation: lords, prepare yourselves. 320

*[Exeunt all except the Bishop of Carlisle, the  
Abbot of Westminster, and Aumerle.]*

ABBOT. A woeful pageant have we here beheld.

CAR. The woe's to come; the children yet unborn  
Shall feel this day as sharp to them as thorn.

AUM. You holy clergymen, is there no plot  
To rid the realm of this pernicious blot?

ABBOT. My lord,  
Before I freely speak my mind herein,  
You shall not only take the sacrament  
To bury mine intents, but also to effect  
Whatever I shall happen to devise. 330  
I see your brows are full of discontent,  
Your hearts of sorrow and your eyes of tears:  
Come home with me to supper; and I'll lay  
A plot shall show us all a merry day. *[Exeunt.]*

329 *bury*] conceal.

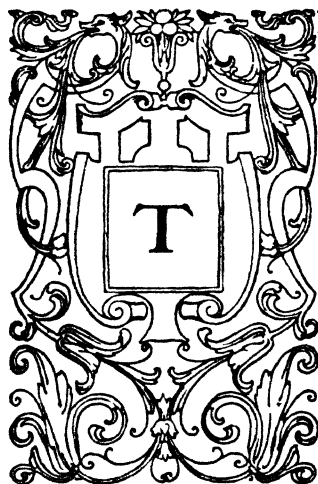


## ACT FIFTH — SCENE I — LONDON

### A STREET LEADING TO THE TOWER

*Enter QUEEN and Ladies*

QUEEN



THIS WAY THE KING WILL  
come; this is the way  
To Julius Cæsar's ill-erected  
tower,  
To whose flint bosom my con-  
demned lord  
Is doom'd a prisoner by proud  
Bolingbroke:  
Here let us rest, if this rebellious  
earth  
Have any resting for her true  
king's queen.

*Enter RICHARD and Guard*

But soft, but see, or rather do not see,  
My fair rose wither: yet look up, behold,

---

2 *Julius Cæsar's . . . tower*] The Tower of London, erected for evil purposes by Julius Cæsar. The fabulous tradition which makes



That you in pity may dissolve to dew,  
 And wash him fresh again with true-love tears. 10  
 Ah, thou, the model where old Troy did stand,  
 Thou map of honour, thou King Richard's tomb,  
 And not King Richard; thou most beauteous inn,  
 Why should hard-favour'd grief be lodged in thee,  
 When triumph is become an alehouse guest?

K. RICH. Join not with grief, fair woman, do not so,  
 To make my end too sudden: learn, good soul,  
 To think our former state a happy dream;  
 From which awaked, the truth of what we are  
 Shows us but this: I am sworn brother, sweet, 20  
 To grim Necessity, and he and I

Julius Cæsar the builder of the Tower is expounded in fuller detail by Shakespeare in *Rich. III*, III, i, 69-74.

11 *the model . . . stand*] the mere pattern of ruined majesty. "Model" means here the pattern or ground plan. "Old Troy" typifies regal grandeur. The latter expression is suggested here by the fable that the foundations of London were laid by fugitives from Troy, who sought to reproduce their abandoned home.

12 *map of honour*] mere picture of honour in lifeless outline. Cf. *Lucrece*, 402, where sleep is called "the map of death."

13-15 *thou most . . . alehouse guest*] The image here is very far-fetched. Richard is compared to a well-ordered hostelry, Bolingbroke to a disorderly alehouse or pothouse. In the hostelry dismal or ugly sorrow finds lodging; in the pothouse triumphal joy is a welcome guest.

16-17 *Join not . . . sudden*] Do not ally yourself with sorrow (which is conquering me), and so kill me outright.

20-21 *I am sworn brother . . . Necessity*] In chivalry knights were wont, under the name of "fratres jurati," or "sworn brothers," to bind themselves by oath to share their fortunes together. Richard affirms that he has entered into this fraternal sort of relationship with "grim Necessity," a personification of grim fate.

Will keep a league till death. Hie thee to France  
And cloister thee in some religious house:  
Our holy lives must win a new world's crown,  
Which our profane hours here have stricken down.

QUEEN. What, is my Richard both in shape and mind  
Transform'd and weaken'd? hath Bolingbroke deposed  
Thine intellect? hath he been in thy heart?  
The lion dying thrusteth forth his paw,  
And wounds the earth, if nothing else, with rage 30  
To be o'erpower'd; and wilt thou, pupil-like,  
Take thy correction mildly, kiss the rod,  
And fawn on rage with base humility,  
Which art a lion and a king of beasts?

K. RICH. A king of beasts, indeed; if aught but  
beasts,  
I had been still a happy king of men.  
Good sometime queen, prepare thee hence for France:  
Think I am dead, and that even here thou takest,  
As from my death-bed, thy last living leave.  
In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire 40  
With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales  
Of woeful ages long ago betid;  
And ere thou bid good night, to quit their griefs,  
Tell thou the lamentable tale of me,  
And send the hearers weeping to their beds:  
For why, the senseless brands will sympathize  
The heavy accent of thy moving tongue,  
And in compassion weep the fire out;

43 to quit their griefs] by way of matching their tales of woe.

46 sympathize] sympathize with. The verb is here used transitively.

And some will mourn in ashes, some coal-black,  
For the deposing of a rightful king. 50

*Enter NORTHUMBERLAND and others*

NORTH. My lord, the mind of Bolingbroke is  
changed;

You must to Pomfret, not unto the Tower.  
And, madam, there is order ta'en for you;  
With all swift speed you must away to France.

K. RICH. Northumberland, thou ladder wherewithal  
The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne,  
The time shall not be many hours of age  
More than it is, ere foul sin gathering head  
Shall break into corruption: thou shalt think,  
Though he divide the realm, and give thee half, 60  
It is too little, helping him to all;  
And he shall think that thou, which know'st the way  
To plant unrightful kings, wilt know again,  
Being ne'er so little urged, another way  
To pluck him headlong from the usurped throne.  
The love of wicked men converts to fear;  
That fear to hate, and hate turns one or both  
To worthy danger and deserved death.

NORTH. My guilt be on my head, and there an end.  
Take leave and part; for you must part forthwith. 70

K. RICH. Doubly divorced! Bad men, you violate  
A twofold marriage; 'twixt my crown and me,  
And then betwixt me and my married wife.

---

53 *order ta'en*] arrangement made.

69 *there an end*] that is the end of the matter; there is no more to be said.

Let me unkiss the oath 'twixt thee and me;  
And yet not so, for with a kiss 't was made.  
Part us, Northumberland; I towards the north,  
Where shivering cold and sickness pines the clime;  
My wife to France: from whence, set forth in pomp,  
She came adorned hither like sweet May.  
Sent back like Hallowmas or short'st of day. 80

QUEEN. And must we be divided? must we part?

K. RICH. Ay, hand from hand, my love, and heart  
from heart.

QUEEN. Banish us both and send the king with me.

NORTH. That were some love but little policy.

QUEEN. Then whither he goes, thither let me go.

K. RICH. So two, together weeping, make one woe.  
Weep thou for me in France, I for thee here;  
Better far off than near, be ne'er the near.

Go, count thy way with sighs; I mine with groans. 90

QUEEN. So longest way shall have the longest moans.

K. RICH. Twice for one step I'll groan, the way  
being short,  
And piece the way out with a heavy heart.

77 *pines the clime*] causes (the people of) the clime or country to waste away.

80 *Hallowmas . . . day*] All Hallowmas or All Souls' Day falls on November 2. It was not the shortest day of the year, though according to the calendar of Shakespeare's time, it was eleven days nearer the winter-solstice than it is now.

88 *Better . . . the near*] "The near" stands for "the nearer." The general meaning of the line is: "It is better you should be far away from me than near me; (did you remain in England) you would be never the nearer to me (in my prison)." "Never the nigher" is a common proverbial phrase, implying that a desired goal can never be reached.

Come, come, in wooing sorrow let's be brief,  
Since, wedding it, there is such length in grief:  
One kiss shall stop our mouths, and dumbly part;  
Thus give I mine, and thus take I thy heart.

QUEEN. Give me mine own again; 't were no good  
part  
To take on me to keep and kill thy heart.  
So, now I have mine own again, be gone,  
That I may strive to kill it with a groan. 100

K. RICH. We make woe wanton with this fond delay:  
Once more, adieu; the rest let sorrow say. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II — THE DUKE OF YORK'S PALACE

*Enter YORK and his DUCHESS*

DUCH. My lord, you told me you would tell the rest,  
When weeping made you break the story off  
Of our two cousins coming into London.

YORK. Where did I leave?

DUCH. At that sad stop, my lord,  
Where rude misgovern'd hands from windows' tops  
Threw dust and rubbish on King Richard's head.

YORK. Then, as I said, the duke, great Bolingbroke,  
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed,  
Which his aspiring rider seem'd to know,  
With slow but stately pace kept on his course, 10  
Whilst all tongues cried "God save thee, Bolingbroke!"  
You would have thought the very windows spake,  
So many greedy looks of young and old  
Through casements darted their desiring eyes

Upon his visage, and that all the walls  
With painted imagery had said at once  
"Jesu preserve thee! welcome, Bolingbroke!"  
Whilst he, from the one side to the other turning,  
Bareheaded, lower than his proud steed's neck,  
Bespake them thus; "I thank you, countrymen:" 20  
And thus still doing, thus he pass'd along.

DUCH. Alack, poor Richard! where rode he the  
whilst?

YORK. As in a theatre, the eyes of men,  
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,  
Are idly bent on him that enters next,  
Thinking his prattle to be tedious;  
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes  
Did scowl on gentle Richard; no man cried "God  
save him!"

No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home:  
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head; 30  
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off,  
His face still combating with tears and smiles,  
The badges of his grief and patience,  
That had not God, for some strong purpose, steel'd  
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted,  
And barbarism itself have pitied him.  
But heaven hath a hand in these events,  
To whose high will we bound our calm contents.  
To Bolingbroke are we sworn subjects now,  
Whose state and honour I for aye allow. 40

16 *painted imagery*] painted or embroidered tapestry or hangings, which  
were commonly decorated with mottoes.

DUCH. Here comes my son Aumerle.

YORK. Aumerle that was;  
But that is lost for being Richard's friend,  
And, madam, you must call him Rutland now:  
I am in parliament pledge for his truth  
And lasting fealty to the new made king.

*Enter AUMERLE*

DUCH. Welcome, my son; who are the violets now  
That strew the green lap of the new come spring?

AUM. Madam, I know not, nor I greatly care not:  
God knows I had as lief be none as one.

YORK. Well, bear you well in this new spring of time, 50  
Lest you be cropp'd before you come to prime.  
What news from Oxford? hold those justs and  
triumphs?

AUM. For aught I know, my lord, they do.

YORK. You will be there, I know.

AUM. If God prevent not, I purpose so.

YORK. What seal is that, that hangs without thy  
bosom?

Yea, look'st thou pale? let me see the writing.

41-43 *Aumerle that was; . . . Rutland now*] According to Holinshed, the Dukes of Aumerle, Surrey, and Exeter were deprived of their Dukedoms by Henry IV's first Parliament, but were allowed to retain their respective Earldoms of Rutland, Kent, and Huntingdon.

46-47 *violets . . . spring*] the "violets" are the favourites of the new king; the "new come spring" refers figuratively to the reign which has just opened.

52 *hold those . . . triumphs?*] are these tournaments and shows to come off?

56 *What seal is that*] The seal was attached to a document by a parchment tag, and might easily slip out of the pocket.

AUM. My lord, 't is nothing.

YORK. No matter, then, who see it:  
I will be satisfied; let me see the writing.

AUM. I do beseech your grace to pardon me: 60  
It is a matter of small consequence,  
Which for some reasons I would not have seen.

YORK. Which for some reasons, sir, I mean to see.  
I fear, I fear, —

DUCH. What should you fear?  
'T is nothing but some band, that he is enter'd into  
For gay apparel 'gainst the triumph day.

YORK. Bound to himself! what doth he with a bond  
That he is bound to? Wife, thou art a fool.  
Boy, let me see the writing.

AUM. I do beseech you, pardon me; I may not  
show it. 70

YORK. I will be satisfied; let me see it, I say.

*[He plucks it out of his bosom and reads it.]*

Treason! foul treason! Villain! traitor! slave!

DUCH. What is the matter, my lord?

YORK. Ho! who is within there?

*Enter a Servant*

Saddle my horse.

God for his mercy, what treachery is here!

DUCH. Why, what is it, my lord?

YORK. Give me my boots, I say; saddle my horse.

*[Exit Servant.]*

---

65 *band*] bond, obligation, surety. Thus the early Quartos. The Folios read *bond*. In the next line but one all the early editions read *bond*. See note on I, i, 2, *supra*.



Now, by mine honour, by my life, by my troth,  
I will appeach the villain.

DUCH. What is the matter?

YORK. Peace, foolish woman. 80

DUCH. I will not peace. What is the matter,  
Aumerle?

AUM. Good mother, be content; it is no more  
Than my poor life must answer.

DUCH. Thy life answer!

YORK. Bring me my boots: I will unto the king.

*Re-enter Servant with boots*

DUCH. Strike him, Aumerle. Poor boy, thou art  
amazed.

Hence, villain! never more come in my sight.

YORK. Give me my boots, I say.

DUCH. Why, York, what wilt thou do?

Wilt thou not hide the trespass of thine own?

Have we more sons? or are we like to have? 90

Is not my teeming date drunk up with time?

And wilt thou pluck my fair son from mine age,

And rob me of a happy mother's name?

Is he not like thee? is he not thine own?

YORK. Thou fond mad woman,

Wilt thou conceal this dark conspiracy?

A dozen of them here have ta'en the sacrament,

And interchangeably set down their hands,

To kill the king at Oxford.

79 *appeach*] impeach, bring accusation against.

85 *amazed*] perplexed, bewildered.

98 *interchangeably*] by reciprocal agreement; cf. I, i, 146, *supra*.

DUCH. He shall be none;  
We'll keep him here: then what is that to him? 100

YORK. Away, fond woman! were he twenty times  
my son,  
I would appeach him.

DUCH. Hadst thou groan'd for him  
As I have done, thou wouldst be more pitiful.  
But now I know thy mind; thou dost suspect  
That I have been disloyal to thy bed,  
And that he is a bastard, not thy son:  
Sweet York, sweet husband, be not of that mind:  
He is as like thee as a man may be,  
Not like to me, or any of my kin,  
And yet I love him.

YORK. Make way, unruly woman! [*Exit.* 110

DUCH. After, Aumerle! mount thee upon his horse;  
Spur post, and get before him to the king,  
And beg thy pardon ere he do accuse thee.  
I'll not be long behind; though I be old,  
I doubt not but to ride as fast as York:  
And never will I rise up from the ground  
Till Bolingbroke have pardon'd thee. Away, be gone!  
[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III — WINDSOR CASTLE

*Enter BOLINGBROKE, PERCY, and other Lords*

BOLING. Can no man tell me of my unthrifty son?  
'T is full three months since I did see him last:

1 *my unthrifty son*] This is the first reference Shakespeare makes to his  
favourite royal hero, Prince Henry, afterwards Henry V.

If any plague hang over us, 't is he.  
I would to God, my lords, he might be found:  
Inquire at London, 'mongst the taverns there,  
For there, they say, he daily doth frequent,  
With unrestrained loose companions,  
Even such, they say, as stand in narrow lanes,  
And beat our watch, and rob our passengers;  
Which he, young wanton and effeminate boy, 10  
Takes on the point of honour to support  
So dissolute a crew.

PERCY. My lord, some two days since I saw the prince,  
And told him of those triumphs held at Oxford.

BOLING. And what said the gallant?

PERCY. His answer was, he would unto the stews,  
And from the common'st creature pluck a glove,  
And wear it as a favour; and with that  
He would unhorse the lustiest challenger.

BOLING. As dissolute as desperate; yet through both 20  
I see some sparks of better hope, which elder years  
May happily bring forth. But who comes here?

*Enter AUMERLE*

AUM. Where is the king?

BOLING. What means our cousin, that he stares and  
looks  
So wildly?

AUM. God save your grace! I do beseech your  
majesty  
To have some conference with your grace alone.

---

11 *Takes on . . . honour*] Makes it a point of honour.

BOLING. Withdraw yourselves, and leave us here  
alone. *[Exeunt Percy and Lords.]*

What is the matter with our cousin now?

AUM. For ever may my knees grow to the earth, 30  
My tongue cleave to my roof within my mouth,  
Unless a pardon ere I rise or speak.

BOLING. Intended or committed was this fault?  
If on the first, how heinous e'er it be,  
To win thy after-love I pardon thee.

AUM. Then give me leave that I may turn the key,  
That no man enter till my tale be done.

BOLING. Have thy desire.

YORK. *[Within]* My liege, beware; look to thyself;  
Thou hast a traitor in thy presence there. 40

BOLING. Villain, I'll make thee safe. *[Drawing.]*

AUM. Stay thy revengeful hand; thou hast no cause  
to fear.

YORK. *[Within]* Open the door, secure, foolhardy  
king:  
Shall I for love speak treason to thy face?  
Open the door, or I will break it open.

*Enter YORK*

BOLING. What is the matter, uncle? speak;  
Recover breath; tell us how near is danger,  
That we may arm us to encounter it.

34 *If on the first*] If your fault consists only in intention.

43 *secure*] over-confident.

44 *speak treason to thy face*] York speaks treason by calling Boling-  
broke "foolhardy king."

YORK. Peruse this writing here, and thou shalt know  
The treason that my haste forbids me show. 50

AUM. Remember, as thou read'st, thy promise pass'd:  
I do repent me; read not my name there;  
My heart is not confederate with my hand.

YORK. It was, villain, ere thy hand did set it down.  
I tore it from the traitor's bosom, king;  
Fear, and not love, begets his penitence:  
Forget to pity him, lest thy pity prove  
A serpent that will sting thee to the heart.

BOLING. O heinous, strong and bold conspiracy!  
O loyal father of a treacherous son! 60  
Thou sheer, immaculate and silver fountain,  
From whence this stream through muddy passages  
Hath held his current and defiled himself!  
Thy overflow of good converts to bad,  
And thy abundant goodness shall excuse  
This deadly plot in thy digressing son.

YORK. So shall my virtue be his vice's bawd;  
And he shall spend mine honour with his shame,  
As thriftless sons their scraping fathers' gold.  
Mine honour lives when his dishonour dies, 70  
Or my shamed life in his dishonour lies:  
Thou kill'st me in his life; giving him breath,  
The traitor lives, the true man's put to death.

DUCH. [*Within*] What ho, my liege! for God's sake,  
let me in.

61 *sheer*] pure and pellucid.

64 *Thy overflow . . . bad*] The overflow, the superfluity, of good, of virtue, in thee is turned to bad, to vice (in thy son).

66 *digressing*] transgressing, turning from the path of virtue.

BOLING. What shrill-voiced suppliant makes this eager cry?

DUCH. A woman, and thy aunt, great king; 't is I.  
Speak with me, pity me, open the door:  
A beggar begs that never begg'd before.

BOLING. Our scene is alter'd from a serious thing,  
And now changed to "The Beggar and the King." 80  
My dangerous cousin, let your mother in:  
I know she is come to pray for your foul sin.

YORK. If thou do pardon, whosoever pray,  
More sins for this forgiveness prosper may.  
This fester'd joint cut off, the rest rest sound;  
This let alone will all the rest confound.

*Enter DUCHESS*

DUCH. O king, believe not this hard-hearted man!  
Love loving not itself none other can.

YORK. Thou frantic woman, what dost thou make  
here?  
Shall thy old dugs once more a traitor rear? 90

DUCH. Sweet York, be patient. Hear me, gentle  
liege. [Kneels.]

BOLING. Rise up, good aunt.

DUCH. Not yet, I thee beseech:  
For ever will I walk upon my knees,  
And never see day that the happy sees,  
Till thou give joy; until thou bid me joy,  
By pardoning Rutland, my transgressing boy.

---

80 "*The Beggar and the King*"] A reference to the old popular ballad of King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid. Cf. *L. L. L.*, IV, i, 65-67.

AUM. Unto my mother's prayers I bend my knee.

[*Kneels.*

YORK. Against them both my true joints bended be.

[*Kneels.*

Ill mayst thou thrive, if thou grant any grace!

DUCH. Pleads he in earnest? look upon his face; 100

His eyes do drop no tears, his prayers are in jest;

His words come from his mouth, ours from our breast:

He prays but faintly and would be denied;

We pray with heart and soul and all beside:

His weary joints would gladly rise, I know;

Our knees shall kneel till to the ground they grow:

His prayers are full of false hypocrisy;

Ours of true zeal and deep integrity.

Our prayers do out-pray his; then let them have

That mercy which true prayer ought to have. 110

BOLING. Good aunt, stand up.

DUCH. Nay, do not say, "stand up;"

Say "pardon" first, and afterwards "stand up."

An if I were thy nurse, thy tongue to teach,

"Pardon" should be the first word of thy speech.

I never long'd to hear a word till now;

Say "pardon," king; let pity teach thee how:

The word is short, but not so short as sweet;

No word like "pardon" for kings' mouths so meet.

YORK. Speak it in French, king; say, "pardonne  
moi."

119 *Speak it in French . . . moi.*] York quibblingly asks the king to refuse his word of pardon. "Pardonne, or pardonnez moi," is the French mode of politely declining a request.

DUCH. Dost thou teach pardon pardon to destroy? 120  
 Ah, my sour husband, my hard-hearted lord,  
 That set'st the word itself against the word!  
 Speak "pardon" as 't is current in our land;  
 The chopping French we do not understand.  
 Thine eye begins to speak, set thy tongue there:  
 Or in thy piteous heart plant thou thine ear;  
 That hearing how our complaints and prayers do pierce,  
 Pity may move thee "pardon" to rehearse.

BOLING. Good aunt, stand up.

DUCH. I do not sue to stand;  
 Pardon is all the suit I have in hand. 130

BOLING. I pardon him, as God shall pardon me.

DUCH. O happy vantage of a kneeling knee!  
 Yet am I sick for fear: speak it again;  
 Twice saying "pardon" doth not pardon twain,  
 But makes one pardon strong.

BOLING. With all my heart  
 I pardon him.

DUCH. A god on earth thou art.

BOLING. But for our trusty brother-in-law, and the  
 abbot,  
 With all the rest of that consorted crew,

124 *chopping*] changing. ambiguous.

125 *set thy tongue there*] make thy tongue speak the pity which thine eye expresses.

137 *brother-in-law*] John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon (created Duke of Exeter in 1397), had married Henry's sister Elizabeth.  
*the abbot*] the Abbot of Westminster.

138 *consorted*] leagued, associated. Cf. V, vi, 15, *infra*: "*consorted* traitors."



Destruction straight shall dog them at the heels.  
Good uncle, help to order several powers 140  
To Oxford, or where'er these traitors are:  
They shall not live within this world, I swear,  
But I will have them, if I once know where.  
Uncle, farewell: and, cousin too, adieu:  
Your mother well hath pray'd, and prove you true.  
DUCH. Come, my old son: I pray God make thee  
new. [Exeunt.]

## SCENE IV — THE SAME

*Enter* EXTON *and* Servant

EXTON. Didst thou not mark the king, what words he  
spake,  
“Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?”  
Was it not so?  
SER. These were his very words.  
EXTON. “Have I no friend?” quoth he: he spake it  
twice,  
And urged it twice together, did he not?  
SER. He did.  
EXTON. And speaking it, he wistly look'd on me;  
As who should say, “I would thou wert the man  
That would divorce this terror from my heart;”  
Meaning the king at Pomfret. Come, let's go: 10  
I am the king's friend, and will rid his foe. [Exeunt.]

7 *wistly*] wistfully.

11 *rid his foe*] rid him of, destroy, his foe.

## SCENE V — POMFRET CASTLE

*Enter* KING RICHARD

K. RICH. I have been studying how I may compare  
 This prison where I live unto the world:  
 And for because the world is populous,  
 And here is not a creature but myself,  
 I cannot do it; yet I'll hammer it out.  
 My brain I'll prove the female to my soul,  
 My soul the father; and these two beget  
 A generation of still-breeding thoughts,  
 And these same thoughts people this little world,  
 In humours like the people of this world, 10  
 For no thought is contented. The better sort,  
 As thoughts of things divine, are intermix'd  
 With scruples, and do set the word itself  
 Against the word:  
 As thus, "Come, little ones," and then again,  
 "It is as hard to come as for a camel  
 To thread the postern of a small needle's eye."  
 Thoughts tending to ambition, they do plot  
 Unlikely wonders; how these vain weak nails  
 May tear a passage through the flinty ribs 20  
 Of this hard world, my ragged prison walls,

9 *this little world*] the microcosm of man, the human brain.

10 *humours*] tempers, dispositions.

13-14 *set . . . word*] set one passage of the Bible against another.

17 *postern*] back gate, narrow entrance. Cf. for the quotation *Matt.* xix, 24.

21 *ragged*] rugged, weather-beaten. Cf. "*tatter'd battlements*," III, iii, 52, and note.

And, for they cannot, die in their own pride.  
Thoughts tending to content flatter themselves  
That they are not the first of fortune's slaves,  
Nor shall not be the last; like silly beggars  
Who sitting in the stocks refuge their shame,  
That many have and others must sit there;  
And in this thought they find a kind of ease,  
Bearing their own misfortunes on the back  
Of such as have before endured the like.

30

Thus play I in one person many people,  
And none contented: sometimes am I king;  
Then treasons make me wish myself a beggar,  
And so I am: then crushing penury  
Persuades me I was better when a king;  
Then am I king'd again: and by and by  
Think that I am unking'd by Bolingbroke,  
And straight am nothing: but whate'er I be,  
Nor I nor any man that but man is  
With nothing shall be pleased, till he be eased  
With being nothing. Music do I hear?

40

[*Music.*

Ha, ha! keep time: how sour sweet music is,  
When time is broke and no proportion kept!  
So is it in the music of men's lives.  
And here have I the daintiness of ear  
To check time broke in a disorder'd string;  
But for the concord of my state and time

26-27 *refuge their shame, . . . sit there*] take refuge from their shame in the thought that many have sat there and others must sit there.

31 *person*] Thus the first Quarto. All the other editions read *prison*.

46 *check*] Thus the early Quartos. The Folios read *hear*.

Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.  
I wasted time, and now doth time waste me;  
For now hath time made me his numbering clock: 50  
My thoughts are minutes; and with sighs they jar  
Their watches on unto mine eyes, the outward watch,  
Whereto my finger, like a dial's point,  
Is pointing still, in cleansing them from tears.  
Now sir, the sound that tells what hour it is  
Are clamorous groans, which strike upon my heart,  
Which is the bell: so sighs and tears and groans  
Show minutes, times, and hours: but my time  
Runs posting on in Bolingbroke's proud joy,  
While I stand fooling here, his Jack o' the clock. 60  
This music mads me; let it sound no more;  
For though it have help madmen to their wits,  
In me it seems it will make wise men mad.

50 *numbering clock*] clock which keeps account of the hours and minutes.

51-58 *My thoughts are minutes . . . times, and hours*] "Jar" in line 51 means "tick"; cf. *Wint. Tale*, I, ii, 43: "a jar o' the clock." "Outward watch" in line 52 is the face or dial of the clock. The whole passage is difficult. The king compares the expressions of his grief — "sighs," "tears," and "groans" — to the indications which a clock gives of the progress of time. His "sighs" correspond to the "jars" or "ticks" of the pendulum; these are counted or numbered as minutes on the dial or face, which the king likens to his eyes; from his eyes (or dial face) his finger is constantly wiping away tears with the same regularity as the dial-hand moves on a clock-face. His "groans" resemble the sound of the bell of the clock, striking the hours.

60 *Jack o' the clock*] "Jack" was a small mechanical figure of a man which struck the bell on the clock usually at each quarter of an hour. Cf. *Rich. III*, IV, ii, 118.

63 *wise men*] men in their wits.

Yet blessing on his heart that gives it me!  
 For 't is a sign of love; and love to Richard  
 Is a strange brooch in this all-hating world.

*Enter a Groom of the Stable*

GROOM. Hail, royal prince!

K. RICH. Thanks, noble peer;

The cheapest of us is ten groats too dear.  
 What art thou? and how comest thou hither,  
 Where no man never comes, but that sad dog  
 That brings me food to make misfortune live?

70

GROOM. I was a poor groom of thy stable, king,  
 When thou wert king; who, travelling towards York,  
 With much ado at length have gotten leave  
 To look upon my sometimes royal master's face.  
 O, how it yearn'd my heart when I beheld  
 In London streets, that coronation-day,  
 When Bolingbroke rode on roan Barbary,

65 *brooch*] jewel, ornament. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, vii, 93-94: "he is the *brooch* indeed And gem of all the nation."

67-68 *Hail, royal prince! . . . ten groats too dear*] A quibble on the words "royal" and "noble," both of which were names of gold coins. A "noble" was worth ten shillings, or thirty groats; a "royal" was worth six shillings and eight pence, or twenty groats. (A groat was worth four pence). The king means that he is the most insignificant of men. He is no longer a "royal" (coin). In any case he is no more than a "noble" (coin), which is worth ten groats less than a "royal." The same quibble occurs *1 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 318-320.

76 *yearn'd*] grieved. Thus the Fourth Folio. The four early Quartos read *ern'd*, and the first three Folios *yern'd*. "Ern" is an old form of "yearn."

78 *roan Barbary*] This reference to Richard's horse is largely Shakespeare's invention, although Froissart tells how Richard's favourite

That horse that thou so often hast bestrid,  
That horse that I so carefully have dress'd ! 80

K. RICH. Rode he on Barbary? Tell me, gentle friend,

How went he under him?

GROOM. So proudly as if he disdain'd the ground.

K. RICH. So proud that Bolingbroke was on his back!  
That jade hath eat bread from my royal hand;  
This hand hath made him proud with clapping him.  
Would he not stumble? would he not fall down,  
Since pride must have a fall, and break the neck  
Of that proud man that did usurp his back?  
Forgiveness, horse! why do I rail on thee, 90  
Since thou, created to be awed by man,  
Wast born to bear? I was not made a horse;  
And yet I bear a burthen like an ass,  
Spurr'd, gall'd and tired by jauncing Bolingbroke.

*Enter Keeper, with a dish*

KEEP. Fellow, give place; here is no longer stay.

K. RICH. If thou love me, 't is time thou wert away.

GROOM. What my tongue dares not, that my heart  
shall say. *[Exit.]*

KEEP. My lord, will 't please you to fall to?

greyhound, Mathe, abandoned Richard in his downfall, and fawned on Bolingbroke.

94 *Spurr'd, gall'd*] Thus the first and second Quartos. The Folios substitute *spur-gall'd*.

*jauncing*] prancing or causing to prance. Cf. Cotgrave, *French-English Dictionary*: "Jancer un cheval. To stirre a horse in the stable till he be swart with all, or as our to *jaunt*, an old word."

K. RICH. Taste of it first, as thou art wont to do.

KEEP. My lord, I dare not: Sir Pierce of Exton, who lately came from the king, commands the contrary. 101

K. RICH. The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee!

Patience is stale, and I am weary of it. [*Beats the Keeper.*]

KEEP. Help, help, help!

*Enter EXTON and Servants, armed*

K. RICH. How now! what means death in this rude assault?

Villain, thy own hand yields thy death's instrument.

[*Snatching an axe from a Servant and killing him.*]

Go thou, and fill another room in hell.

[*He kills another. Then Exton strikes him down.*]

That hand shall burn in never-quenching fire

That staggers thus my person. Exton, thy fierce hand

Hath with the king's blood stain'd the king's own land.

Mount, mount, my soul! thy seat is up on high; 111

Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die. [*Dies.*]

EXTON. As full of valour as of royal blood:

Both have I spill'd; O would the deed were good!

For now the devil, that told me I did well,

Says that this deed is chronicled in hell.

This dead king to the living king I'll bear:

Take hence the rest, and give them burial here. [*Exeunt.*]

99 *Taste . . . wont to do*] The keeper had acted as "server" or "taster," an officer in the royal household whose duty it was to taste the food before it was served at the royal table.

SCENE VI      KING RICHARD II

SCENE VI—WINDSOR CASTLE

*Flourish.* Enter BOLINGBROKE, YORK, with other Lords, and Attendants

BOLING. Kind uncle York, the latest news we hear  
Is that the rebels have consumed with fire  
Our town of Cicester in Cloucestershire;  
But whether they be ta'en or slain we hear not.

*Enter* NORTHUMBERLAND

Welcome, my lord: what is the news?

NORTH. First, to thy sacred state wish I all happiness.

The next news is, I have to London sent  
The heads of Oxford, Salisbury, Blunt, and Kent:  
The manner of their taking may appear  
At large discoursed in this paper here. 10

BOLING. We thank thee, gentle Percy, for thy pains;  
And to thy worth will add right worthy gains.

*Enter* FITZWATER

FITZ. My lord, I have from Oxford sent to London  
The heads of Brocas and Sir Bennet Seely,

8 *Oxford*] Thus the first Quarto, for which the Folios rightly substitute *Spencer*. Oxford was not, but Spencer was, one of the executed persons.

10 *discoursed*] described.



---

Two of the dangerous consorted traitors  
That sought at Oxford thy dire overthrow.

BOLING. Thy pains, Fitzwater, shall not be forgot;  
Right noble is thy merit, well I wot.

*Enter PERCY, and the BISHOP OF CARLISLE*

PERCY. The grand conspirator, Abbot of Westminster,  
With clog of conscience and sour melancholy 20  
Hath yielded up his body to the grave;  
But here is Carlisle living, to abide  
Thy kingly doom and sentence of his pride.

BOLING. Carlisle, this is your doom:  
Choose out some secret place, some reverend room,  
More than thou hast, and with it joy thy life;  
So as thou livest in peace, die free from strife:  
For though mine enemy thou hast ever been,  
High sparks of honour in thee have I seen.

*Enter EXTON, with persons bearing a coffin*

EXTON. Great king, within this coffin I present 30  
Thy buried fear: herein all breathless lies  
The mightiest of thy greatest enemies,  
Richard of Bordeaux, by me hither brought.

BOLING. Exton, I thank thee not; for thou hast  
wrought

---

15 *consorted*] leagued, associated. Cf. V, iii, 138, *supra*: "*consorted crew*."

33 *Richard of Bordeaux*] Richard II was born at Bordeaux, where his father, the Black Prince, was in residence at the time.

A deed of slander, with thy fatal hand,  
Upon my head and all this famous land.

EXTON. From your own mouth, my lord, did I this  
deed.

BOLING. They love not poison that do poison need,  
Nor do I thee: though I did wish him dead,  
I hate the murderer, love him murdered. 40  
The guilt of conscience take thou for thy labour,  
But neither my good word nor princely favour:  
With Cain go wander thorough shades of night,  
And never show thy head by day nor light.  
Lords, I protest, my soul is full of woe,  
That blood should sprinkle me to make me grow:  
Come, mourn with me for that I do lament,  
And put on sullen black incontinent:  
I'll make a voyage to the Holy Land,  
To wash this blood off from my guilty hand: 50  
March sadly after; grace my mournings here;  
In weeping after this untimely bier. [Exeunt.

---

35 *A deed of slander*] A deed which will cause slander or scandal.

52 *weeping after*] Thus all early editions. Pope read *over* for *after*.

“After” seems to be repeated in error from the previous line.









# KING JOHN

W. H. MARGETSON

**A**ARTHUR. *"O, save me, Hubert, save me ! my  
eyes are out  
Even with the fierce looks of these bloody men."*

ACT IV, SCENE I, line 73.

**THE LIFE AND DEATH OF  
KING JOHN**

**WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY RICHARD GARNETT  
AND AN ORIGINAL FRONTISPIECE BY W. H. MARGETSON**

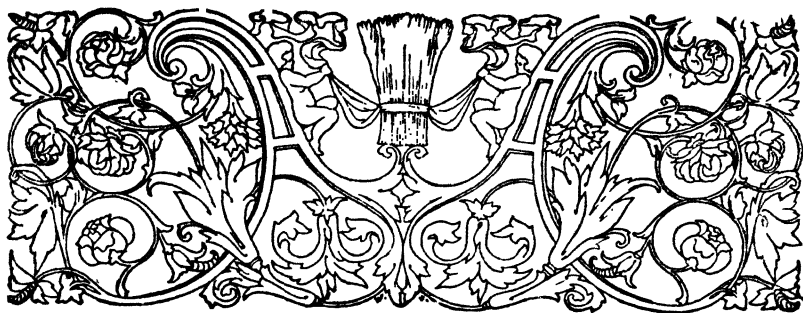




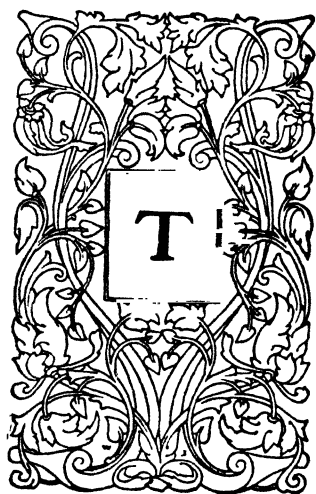
# CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION TO KING JOHN BY RICHARD GARNETT . . . . .	ix
TEXT OF THE PLAY . . . . .	1





## INTRODUCTION



THE national epic of England has been well said to be written in Shakespeare's historical plays. It was but a natural development of this thought when Schlegel pronounced the first and the last of these dramas — "King John" and "King Henry VIII" — to stand to the rest in the relation of Prologue and Epilogue. This may be accepted if the character is not attributed to them in virtue of any supposed deliberate intention on the author's part. "King Henry VIII," which is not wholly or principally Shakespeare's, is clearly an occasional piece called forth by the public joy upon the Protestant marriage of the Princess Elizabeth, for whom a Roman Catholic bridegroom had been apprehended. The undramatic subject of Henry V, of

## KING JOHN

which Shakespeare has nevertheless made so much, was manifestly chosen to idealise Essex's expedition to Ireland in the year of its representation. When, therefore, Shakespeare wrote *King John*, in or about 1595, he can have had no prevision of a connected epic in dramatic form. "*King John*" may nevertheless be regarded as in some measure a prologue, not merely or chiefly because the action precedes that of the other plays in order of time, but because it embodies in the most concentrated form the patriotic idea by which the entire series is animated.

Not more than seven or eight of Shakespeare's plays betray a direct purpose, and whenever this purpose exists it has reference to public affairs. We have seen the drift of "*King Henry V*" and "*King Henry VIII.*" The purpose of "*King John*" is much more profound. The play is a veiled exhibition of Queen Elizabeth's conflict with the Pope and the Spaniard, and its moral is the impotence of the foreign foe but for domestic treason. The exaltation of the unpromising John as a representative of the national resistance to Romish and other foreign aggression was not a new idea. Bishop Bale, no stickler at trifles, had worked it out in Edward VI's time in a play rude for even that primitive period of dramatic art, in which John, mirror of virtue, is represented as poisoned by the monks, to prevent him from evangelising his kingdom. Shakespeare could derive nothing from Bishop Bale except amusement; but he is deeply indebted to another predecessor, the anonymous writer of "*The Troublesome Raigne of*

## INTRODUCTION

King John," first printed in 1591, and probably produced a few years previously. The diction is entirely his own, but his dramatic economy is mainly his predecessor's, though the wisdom of his alterations evinces his consummate skill as an adapter. His relation to his predecessor is fully investigated in Mr. Edward Rose's excellent introduction to the facsimile reprint of "The Troublesome Raigne." His object and the old dramatist's were the same, — to inculcate loyalty, union, and stubborn resistance to the foreigner, and, as a necessary means to this end, to preserve John's inauspicious character from utter contempt.

The old play is inartistically divided into two parts. Shakespeare found it long where it ought to be short, and short where it ought to be long. He has therefore condensed freely, expunged entire scenes and diminished the importance of particular characters, that he might have room to expatiate when needful. As the friend and protégé of Southampton, then a Roman Catholic, he could not but find his predecessor much too polemical. While retaining the Protestant colour of the original piece, and painting Romish ecclesiastics in a forbidding aspect, he has suppressed some violent anti-papal tirades and jocularities at the expense of the monastic orders. Yet he has not departed by a hair's breadth from his predecessor's position as a patriotic poet; nor could he, for John's resistance to France and Rome alone prevents the canon that no tragic protagonist shall be wholly bad from being violated in his person. The old writer was a middling poet and an artless playwright, but Shakespeare

## KING JOHN

himself could not have bettered the moral he draws from the story of King John : —

“ A mother, though she be unnatural,  
Is better than the kindest stepdame is.  
Let never Englishman trust foreign rule.”

The disappointed French pretender enforces the same lesson : —

“ It boots not me,  
Nor any prince nor power of Christendom,  
To seek to win this island Albion,  
Unless we have a party in the realm.”

This is entirely to the point, but the diction is prosaic. If the old writer's power of expression were equal to his justness of perception he would frequently succeed well. He knows how John ought to feel better than what John ought to say : —

“ Set down, set down the load not worth your pain,  
For done am I with deadly sounding grief ;  
Sickly and succourless, hopeless of any good.  
The world hath wearied me, and I have wearied it.  
It loaths I live, I live and loath myself.  
Who pities me ? to whom have I been kind ?  
But to a few, a few will pity me.  
Why die I not ? Death scorns so vile a prey.  
Why live I not ? Life hates so sad a prize.  
I sue to both to be retained of either,  
But both are deaf : I can be heard of neither.”

Here are the rudiments of eloquence. If Shakespeare had followed the example of his predecessor in placing

## INTRODUCTION

some effective speeches and soliloquies in the mouth of the stricken king, he would have dignified the latter part of his piece, which is animated indeed, but not so overwhelmingly tragical as he might easily have made it. Perhaps he wrote in haste: perhaps he shrank from carrying the humiliation of the Crown too far in a drama where the Crown represented the nation. He has taken another way of reconciling us as far as may be to his ignoble hero by depicting him as the object of the unswerving loyalty of the personage who morally, as John officially, represents the Englishman. The character of Faulconbridge, which seems to be founded upon a tradition of that unscrupulous soldier of fortune, Faukes de Breauté, a man of might in the days of John, and of extraction sufficiently obscure to pass for illegitimate, belongs substantially to the old dramatist; but while he has only thought of enlivening his action by the introduction of a semi-comic personage, Shakespeare has framed an Englishman so representative of his country in strength and weakness that we must accept his verdict on John as the verdict of the nation. With signal tact, having once established Faulconbridge's lineage, he forbears to remind us that Faulconbridge is John's half-brother, and consequently bound to him by even stronger ties than personal loyalty and zeal for the public welfare. To give more weight to Faulconbridge's action, he has considerably toned down the humorous element in the character as he received it from his predecessor, and in one or two soliloquies has introduced a vein of sardonic criticism on the world's



## KING JOHN

ways, sufficient to show that the speaker is a man of sense and reflection, and not a mere soldier. When upon the death of John such a man exclaims : —

“ Art thou gone so ? I do but stay behind  
To do the office for thee of revenge,  
And then my soul shall wait on thee to heaven,  
As it on earth hath been thy servant still.”

we feel that a verdict has been rendered which may surprise but which cannot be ignored. England is speaking by the mouth of this most representative Englishman, and absolves her guilty and ill-starred king.

The redemption of John consists in the fact that he, too, is a representative of England. He is even more : he is the prototype of Elizabeth as regards the political situation with which he is grappling, though by no means as regards personal character, and is performing the part ingloriously which she would have performed gloriously. Shakespeare takes the first opportunity of showing that John is his hero, not in virtue of any pretension of his own to the heroic character, but in his official capacity as guardian of the independence of the realm. Scarcely has he appealed to “ our strong possession and our right ” when his shrewd old mother whispers : —

“ Your strong possession much more than your right,  
Or else it must go wrong with you and me.”

How superior seems his competitor, Arthur, who has not only right but youthful innocence and every amiable quality ! But Arthur has a fatal disqualification : he is the tool of the foreigner, and can only hope to succeed

## INTRODUCTION

by foreign arms. Austria promises to gain for him not merely the districts in France to which he lays claim, but

“That pale, that white-faced shore,  
Whose foot spurns back the ocean’s roaring tides,  
And coops from other lands her islanders,  
Even till that England, hedged in with the main,  
That water-walled bulwark, still secure  
And confident from foreign purposes,  
Even till that utmost corner of the west  
Salute thee for her king: till then, fair boy,  
Will I not think of home, but follow arms.”

After this, Arthur is clearly impossible. John, however sorry a personage, represents national independence, and, granted that there may be defects in his title, has a moral claim to the allegiance of the country. Shakespeare has also taken the most favourable view of John’s character of which circumstances admitted, overlooking the historians’ charges of ferocity, rapacity, and lust. These he could well afford to disregard as not essential to his main action, while his view of such of John’s private failings as affected his public character is probably correct. John’s chief fault, unkingly as it is, is not so much a vice as an infirmity. It is an excessive timourousness. Under the pressure of fear he commits or rather designs villainous actions without being absolutely a villain. Nor is his the fear that trembles at its own shadow. He is not daunted by the mere threats of his adversaries, nor does his defiance of them evaporate in mere words. Until actually defeated he bears himself proudly and well; but when he is once driven into a peril-

## KING JOHN

ous strait his quick intelligence shows him the situation, and he is incapable of meeting it in a manly spirit. His sole idea is to disarm the imminent peril, and for this end no manœuvre is too base. He is not devoid of compassion for Arthur or of shame at the temporary resignation of his crown, but concern for his own safety overbalances both. Shakespeare has done the best possible for him by putting some of the finest poetry of the play into his mouth, especially when circumstances make him the mouthpiece of England :—

“ No Italian priest  
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions ;  
But as we, under heaven, are supreme head,  
So under Him that great supremacy,  
Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,  
Without the assistance of a mortal hand :  
So tell the pope, all reverence set apart  
To him and his usurp'd authority.”

Every auditor knew that this was the position Elizabeth had taken up and was still maintaining, and must have felt that the play's centre of gravity lay there, and that in comparison with it the fate of Arthur, however tragic and pathetic, was but a subordinate detail. Shakespeare has further mitigated John's humiliation by passing over everything relating to Magna Charta, and ascribing the barons' revolt to horror at a crime imputed to him, of which, though in intention guilty, he was in act innocent. Our sympathies run counter to those who support a foreign invader on an imaginary ground, and whatever is lost by the barons is gained by

## INTRODUCTION

John. It is true that the exhibition of *Magna Charta* on the stage would not have been suffered by the government in Shakespeare's time ; but even if this obstacle had not existed Shakespeare would probably have omitted it on dramatic grounds.

Faulconbridge is not merely the faithful follower who throws the shield of his loyalty over John, but also his complement, who fills up the measure of what is lacking in him. Could John's official and Faulconbridge's personal character be united in the same individual, England would have a perfect representative. As a type of his country, he is made to participate in the most characteristic national faults ; he is boisterous, aggressive, and contemptuous of the feelings of others. His animosity to Austria is explained by the Austrian duke's behaviour to his father, strangely exaggerated by the assertion (a legacy from the old play) put into the king of France's mouth that Austria has been accessory to Cœur-de-lion's death. The mixture of truculence and joviality gives a slightly comic tint to the character, and tends to relieve the general gloom of a tragedy full of "treasons, stratagems, and spoils." The importance of Faulconbridge's part justifies in some measure what appears an artistic fault, the inordinate proportion of the first act devoted to his affairs, which have no connection with the main business of the play. The fault, for such it must be deemed, is partly due to Shakespeare's refined delicacy. The author of the old play saves space by bringing Lady Faulconbridge on the stage while the dispute as to her son's legitimacy is being agitated.

## KING JOHN

Shakespeare, comprehending the awkwardness of the situation, introduces her in a subsequent scene, which mitigates her embarrassment, but prolongs the action.

Faulconbridge thus performs for his master a service somewhat akin to that which Siegfried renders to King Gunther in the *Nibelungen Lied*. John takes lustre from his follower, and appears a less unworthy forerunner of the great conflict of Elizabeth's times. He is further helped by a daring sacrifice of historical to poetical truth. Arthur is represented as laying claim to the Crown of England. This he never did. His pretensions were limited to the French duchies, but so restricted a stage would not have fitted the great contest of Elizabeth with Rome and Spain, which was never to be out of the mind of dramatist or spectator. Shakespeare has again deviated from historical truth for a most obvious reason, in making Arthur little more than a child instead of the adolescent that he really was. But for this the heart-breaking scene with Hubert would lose most of its pathos, which depends less upon the atrocity of the crime than the helplessness of the victim. It is remarkable that the idea of blinding the young prince must have been an after-thought, and that Shakespeare has not been at the trouble to make it consistent with what precedes and follows. John's hints to Hubert, that his nephew must disappear, foreshadow his death; there is no suggestion of his being blinded. When, however, Hubert visits Arthur in prison he presents a warrant for blinding, not killing him; but in the subsequent scene the warrant is for Arthur's death, and

## INTRODUCTION

John has evidently no idea that his nephew's eyes have been in jeopardy, or that his life has not been taken.

The blinding is borrowed from the old play, and the absence of all endeavour to reconcile the two versions argues that Shakespeare's drama must have been composed in great haste. This is not wholly disadvantageous; if on the one hand some situations are worked out less thoroughly than might have been expected, on the other the language is brilliantly energetic and rapid. The resemblance between John's behaviour to Hubert and Elizabeth's to Secretary Davison has been frequently observed, and it is certainly remarkable that Shakespeare ventured near such dangerous ground. It must be remembered, however, that Shakespeare's patron, Essex, had persistently interceded for Davison.

The principal fault of "King John," viewed as poetry, is an occasional employment of conceits below the dignity of tragedy, which unfortunately insinuate themselves into the finest scenes where simplicity and severity are most called for. In the unutterably pathetic scene just adverted to, the beautiful thought that the iron with which Hubert would brand Arthur's eyes had grown cold, as though the senseless metal refused to be his accomplice, is followed by a number of pretty quaint ingenuities entirely out of keeping with tragic emotion. The distraught Constance calls death *an odoriferous stench*, and follows this up with a tirade that can only be described as a choice specimen of the genus of the forcible feeble. It must be acknowledged that she soon recovers herself, and Shakespeare has seldom reached a

## KING JOHN

greater height of impassioned eloquence than in the thrilling scorn of some of her outbursts and the heart-rending pathos of others. The tragedy queen is a very human personage, and at bottom such as may be encountered in any order of society. With all her grandeur, Constance, in the light in which she is here displayed, is just such a mother as nine-tenths of the mothers of the world. She is not ambitious for herself, all her ambition is concentrated upon her idolised boy; she would not have shown half the emotion for a daughter. The idea that her Arthur should lose an atom of his right is insufferable to her; rather than endure it she will drench kingdoms in blood; and when the wrong is sanctioned by her own friends, her indignation becomes absolute frenzy. It is inconceivable to her that there can be two opinions on the question, or that anything should for a moment be put into competition with the redress of her son's wrongs:—

“You are forsworn, forsworn;  
You came in arms to spill mine enemies' blood,  
But now in arms you strengthen it with yours:  
The grappling vigour and rough frown of war  
Is cold in amity and painted peace,  
And our oppression hath made up this league.  
Arm, arm, you heavens, against these perjured kings!  
A widow cries; be husband to me, heavens!  
Let not the hours of this ungodly day  
Wear out the day in peace; but, ere sunset,  
Set armed discord 'twixt these perjured kings!”

The shrewishness of Constance in the early scenes is equally in keeping, she is living throughout at a white

## INTRODUCTION

heat of passionate excitement. She could bear any strain of conflict indefinitely, but she cannot bear failure, and when her cause is lost she vanishes in death like a lamp deprived of air. The effect of her vehemence is heightened by the contrast with Arthur, the model of gentle innocence. The pathos of the scene where the poor boy, rent and torn among the fierce people about him, exclaims

“ Good my mother, peace !  
I would that I were low laid in my grave.  
I am not worth this coil that ’s made for me,”

is fully as great as that of Constance’s famous reply to the not unreasonable admonition of the cold-hearted and worldly King Philip, “ You are as fond of grief as of your child ” : —

“ Grief fills the room up of my absent child,  
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,  
Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,  
Remembers me of all his gracious parts,  
Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form ;  
Then have I reason to be fond of grief.  
Fare you well : had you such a loss as I,  
I could give better comfort than you do.”

Constance clearly does herself great injustice when she declares that she could not have loved her son if he had been

“Lame, foolish, crooked, swart, prodigious.”

The maternal instinct would have overcome all such trifling drawbacks, and she would have thought no more



## KING JOHN

of them than the sage and temperate Queen Elinor thinks of the moral deformities of *her* son.

Constance, though a real historical character, is dramatically Shakespeare's creation. Pandulph, the Papal Nuncio, is an historical character in every point of view; or rather, in the absence of direct information respecting him, Shakespeare has been careful to paint him in colours befitting his function. He appears as the incarnation of Roman arrogance in his assertion of Papal authority, and of Roman unscrupulousness in his readiness to annul every moral obligation inconvenient to the Holy See. With such a sanction, perjury and slaughter become virtues, and there is no moral fibre in Pandulph's character to render such teaching in any way difficult to him. Intellectually he is far superior to any of the people with whom he comes into contact. "How green you are, and fresh in this old world!" he says pityingly to the young Dauphin, when the latter laments the captivity of Arthur, which at first sight naturally appears a disaster. But Pandulph has fathomed John's nature, and foresees that his victory will prove his ruin.

"Tis strange to think how much King John hath lost  
In this which he accounts so clearly won."

Pandulph's Italian craft is nevertheless unable to control fiercer and more impulsive natures, and he is left pleading for liberty to speak, which he does not obtain. Although the denunciation of Papal interference in English affairs is the salt and soul of the drama, it has necessarily had the bad effect of excluding one great and noble

## INTRODUCTION

contemporary figure from Shakespeare's canvas. The introduction of Magna Charta was, as we have seen, impossible in Shakespeare's day, but Stephen Langton, the patriotic Archbishop, and no friend of the Nuncio's, might well have been represented as bringing about the barons' submission to the King, and we should thus have got rid of the offensive and incredible incident of the revelation of the Dauphin's plot to destroy his own English partisans. Shakespeare took this from the old play, where it occupies two scenes: he has shown his usual judgment by reducing these to one, but it is to be wished that he could have banished the awkward contrivance altogether. To have represented a Romish ecclesiastic in a favourable light, nevertheless, would have been to undo with one hand what he had throughout been doing with the other. The poetry and passion of King John will not be surpassed, but there is room for a rehandling of the subject in the calmer atmosphere and with the more ample knowledge of the twentieth century. Pandulph's character, nevertheless, would have to remain as Shakespeare left it, as striking a contrast to Faulconbridge's as the outward man must have been in costume, bearing, and complexion.

Had Shakespeare written when the Sovereign was secure upon the throne, when Spain had become a second-class power, when Roman Catholicism was no longer a synonym of disloyalty, and when a scene could safely be laid at Runnymede, "King John" might have been a more majestic if less impassioned play. It may still be questioned whether it would not have lost in fire and spirit

## KING JOHN

even more than it gained in breadth of view and tranquil wisdom. At all events the shortcomings of partisanship are not imputable to Shakespeare, whose duty and whose interest alike constrained him to satisfy the needs of his own age. There are, nevertheless, instances of defective dramatic economy and missed opportunities to which this apology does not apply. We shall not notice Shakespeare's neglect of chronology and arbitrary dealing with the facts of history further than by the remark, that never has he shown himself more masterful than here, where all the chief events of sixteen years, save one, — the most important of all, conspicuous by its absence, — are flung together into one seething cauldron of turmoil. This does not exceed the poet's prerogative, and the less so as the events of John's reign, viewed in the ever-lengthening vista of Time, appeared to Shakespeare much closer together than they really were, and appear to us closer still. Nor need we quarrel with the extraordinary romance of the double siege of Angiers, derived from the old drama or the introduction of artillery before the reputed inventor of gunpowder was born. The main fault is that, probably from haste of production, Shakespeare does not always make the most of his opportunities. We look for something thrilling when the dying John is brought forth writhing in the grasp of a mortal fever, and at first get nothing but frigidity and fretfulness : —

“ None of you will bid the winter come  
To thrust his icy fingers in my maw,  
Nor let my kingdom's rivers take their course  
Through my burn'd bosom, nor entreat the north

## INTRODUCTION

To make his bleak winds kiss my parched lips  
And comfort me with cold. I do not ask you much,  
I beg cold comfort ; and you are so strait,  
And so ingrateful, you deny me that."

Yet here too the speaker rallies, and expires asking of the weal of the kingdom : —

"O cousin, thou art come to set mine eye :  
The tackle of my heart is crack'd and burn'd,  
And all the shrouds wherewith my life should sail  
Are turned to one thread, one little hair :  
My heart hath one poor string to stay it by,  
Which holds but till thy news be uttered ;  
And then all this thou seest is but a clod  
And module of confounded royalty.

*Bast.* The Dauphin is preparing hitherward,  
Where heaven He knows how we shall answer him ;  
For in a night the best part of my power,  
As I upon advantage did remove,  
Were in the Washes all unwarily  
Devoured by the unexpected flood.

[*The King dies.*]"

This mailed tragedy stands to Shakespeare's other plays of English history in the relation of a prologue, not merely as first in order of period, but as depicting a rudimentary condition of English society. It is Shakespeare's one purely mediæval play, for by Henry IV's time a modern element has come in, and Richard II is rather a study of character than a delineation of contemporary manners. "King John," on the other hand, gives "the very form and pressure of the time."

## KING JOHN

It is therefore distinguished by the overwhelming force of the passions represented, and also by their simplicity. Every leading character has a single object, which he pursues with no more deviation than the stress of circumstances demands. John would save his crown and Faulconbridge his country ; Constance would vindicate her son's rights and Pandulph would subjugate England to the Pope. There is no complication of motives, no hesitation or qualification ; passion is primitive, simple, and Titanic. The language is consequently high pitched throughout, but without exaggeration. Everything is on the grand scale, as it ought to be when the interlocutors are kings, queens, princesses, nobles, and cardinals, and there is hardly a person of humble birth or low calling in the piece. The existence of the commonalty is not, indeed, unrecognised. The sturdy citizens of Angiers stand up stoutly for themselves against two kings : Pandulph threatens John with the loss of his subjects' hearts, and Hubert reports their discontent in a passage of unsurpassed graphic force : —

“Young Arthur's death is common in their mouths :  
And when they talk of him, they shake their heads  
And whisper one another in the ear ;  
And he that speaks doth gripe the hearer's wrist,  
Whilst he that hears makes fearful action,  
With wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes.  
I saw a smith stand with his hammer, thus,  
The whilst his iron did on the anvil cool,  
With open mouth swallowing a tailor's news ;  
Who, with his shears and measure in his hand,

## INTRODUCTION

Standing on slippers, which his nimble haste  
Had falsely thrust upon contrary feet,  
Told of a many thousand warlike French  
That were embattailed and rank'd in Kent."

But even this speech shows the speaker's disdain for the common people, except in so far as they may be dangerous, and they hardly appear except as a force in the background. The land is as yet the property of kings and nobles, and the atmosphere of the play is entirely oligarchic. Yet, different as are the conditions from those of his own day, Shakespeare thoroughly carries out his great purpose of admonishing his contemporaries what may become of them if they give place to civil discord. Absorbed in this chief design, he slights every minor attraction. There is no comedy in "King John," no music, no love-making, no by-play or under-plot to divert attention from the serious action; save for the sallies of the Bastard, there is even no humour. It relies upon its political significance, more apparent to contemporaries than to posterity, upon mediæval picturesqueness and a martial spirit that stirs the blood throughout, upon splendid language and scenes of intense pathos. The brilliant picture of the mediæval world is not morally attractive, and the hard facts of history jar with poetical justice, which is nevertheless vindicated in the end. The plotters and schemers are eventually baffled; the blunt honesty of Faulconbridge gains its desire in the restoration of national concord and independence; and though Arthur is in his grave, another innocent boy arises in his place:—

## KING JOHN

“Be of good comfort, prince, for you are born  
To set a form upon that indigest  
Which he hath left so shapeless and so rude.”

“King John” was written before 1598, appearing in Meres’s list of Shakespeare’s plays up to that year. It was first printed in the folio of 1623, and there is no record of any early performance from which the date could be inferred. The absence of prose, which has been alleged as a proof of its being an early play, appears to us sufficiently accounted for by the high rank of the *dramatis personæ*. It was, in our opinion, hastily written in response to some strong outburst of national feeling, and we have little doubt that this was prompted by the apprehensions of a Spanish invasion in the summer of 1595, when, as Camden tells us, “the wailing women with fresh sorrow lamented that their slain sons and brethren were not reserved for these times.” A descent was actually effected in Cornwall and three fishing villages burned, “and these were the first and last Spaniards that ever made any hostile landing in England.” The scene so graphically painted of the artisans devouring news of embattled invaders might be witnessed at any smithy or hostel: and the words put into the mouth of Austria could never have come more forcibly home to a British audience: —

“By how much unexpected, by so much  
We must awake endeavour for defence,  
For courage mounteth with occasion:  
Let them be welcome then, we are prepared.”

## INTRODUCTION

Being written to serve a temporary though a noble purpose, "King John" could not retain quite the same vividness of interest for succeeding ages, and its popularity on the stage has been below its desert, yet there are incidents of interest in its dramatic history. Its popularity in Shakespeare's own time may be inferred from the circumstance that, the play never having been printed until its appearance in the first folio of 1623, new editions of the old "Troublesome Raigne" were fraudulently palmed off as Shakespeare's work in 1611 and 1622. There is, however, no record of any performance until 1737, when Rich revived it with success. About ten years previously Cibber had arranged for the production of an altered version under the title of "Papal Tyranny," but even in that age Shakespeare was preferred to Cibber, and upon the rumour of the intended desecration getting abroad "such a clamour arose that Cibber went to the playhouse, and, without saying a word to anybody, took the play from the prompter's desk and marched off with it in his pocket." Nothing, however, was lost by waiting. The Pretender did for Shakespeare and Cibber what Philip of Spain had done for Shakespeare and his anonymous predecessor. It is a proof of the national and patriotic character of "King John" that the rebellion of 1745 not only brought it back to the boards, but reanimated the suspended vitality of Cibber's abominable parody, which was acted ten times at the rival theatre, while the genuine Shakespeare appears to have succeeded still better. Since then, King John has been frequently revived, and always with success, but has never established itself as a



## KING JOHN

popular play. It has always been a favourite with actors of high genius, such as Kemble, Kean, Macready, Young, and among actresses Mrs. Siddons and Helen Faucit. Young chose the character of King John for his portrait. Yet these great tragedians must have felt that there were other plays in the Shakespearean repertory which afforded greater scope for their powers. John, with all his opportunities for intense facial expression and effective declamation, must be an unsympathetic part. The actor can never hope to make his audience feel with him, and must be conscious that he is contending against the stream. Constance affords unsurpassed opportunities as far as she goes, but makes great demands upon the performer's physical strength, even though she does not go very far. In the third act she disappears from the stage, and the actress who as Lady Macbeth or Desdemona would have preserved her empire over the audience to the last, finds herself dramatically non-existent. It may thus be conjectured that the feelings of performers rather than of the public occasion the comparative neglect of one of the plays of Shakespeare which, on patriotic and moral grounds, one would wish to see most frequently performed. It is remarkable that there is but one record of a renowned performance of Faulconbridge, one of the personages out of whom a gifted actor might most easily create an exceptional part. Perhaps the leading tragedian, conscious of the difficulties inherent in John, has feared to be overshadowed by a really great Faulconbridge. It is to be noted that the actor (Walker, in 1737) who did achieve a memorable success had pre-

## INTRODUCTION

viously been eminent as Captain Macheath, another part requiring the interfusion of humorous with serious elements.

All Shakespeare's dramas on English history should be studied together and regarded as a single work, the national epic of England. But, were it necessary to select one from the rest for an educational purpose, none would have a better claim than "King John."

RICHARD GARNETT.



**THE LIFE AND DEATH OF  
KING JOHN**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ<sup>1</sup>

KING JOHN.

PRINCE HENRY, son to the king.

ARTHUR, Duke of Bretagne, nephew to the king.

The Earl of PEMBROKE.

The Earl of ESSEX.

The Earl of SALISBURY.

The LORD BIGOT.

HUBERT DE BURGH.

ROBERT FAULCONBRIDGE, son to Sir Robert Faulconbridge.

PHILIP the BASTARD, his half-brother.

JAMES GURNEY, servant to Lady Faulconbridge.

PETER of Pomfret, a prophet.

PHILIP, King of France.

LEWIS, the Dauphin.

LYMOGES, Duke of Austria.

CARDINAL PANDULPH, the Pope's legate.

MELUN, a French lord.

CHATILLON, ambassador from France to King John.

QUEEN ELINOR, mother to King John.

CONSTANCE, mother to Arthur.

BLANCH of Spain, niece to King John.

LADY FAULCONBRIDGE.

Lords, Citizens of Angiers, Sheriff, Heralds, Officers, Soldiers,  
Messengers, and other Attendants.

SCENE: *Partly in England, and partly in France*

<sup>1</sup> This play was printed for the first time in the First Folio, where it is divided into acts and scenes, although the divisions are often arbitrary, and compel much editorial revision. A list of the *dramatis personæ* was first supplied by Rowe in 1709 (cf. for the entry Lymoges, Duke of Austria, II, i, 5, *infra*, and note). *The Troublesome Raigne of John, King of England*, the piece by another hand, which Shakespeare largely adapted in his own play, was first published in 1594, and was reissued in 1611 and 1622.

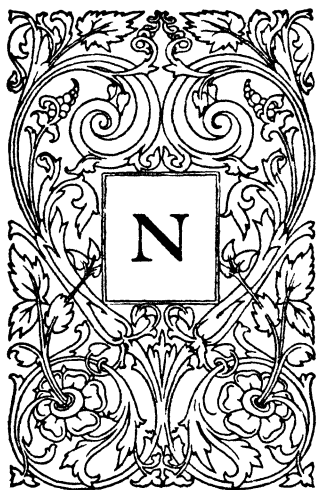


## ACT FIRST — SCENE I

### KING JOHN'S PALACE

*Enter KING JOHN, QUEEN ELINOR, PEMBROKE, ESSEX, SALISBURY, and others, with CHATILLON*

KING JOHN



OW, SAY, CHATILLON,  
what would France with us?

CHAT. Thus, after greeting,  
speaks the King of France  
In my behaviour to the majesty,  
The borrowed majesty, of Eng-  
land here.

ELI. A strange beginning:  
"borrowed majesty!"

K. JOHN. Silence, good  
mother; hear the embassy.

CHAT. Philip of France, in  
right and true behalf

Of thy deceased brother Geffrey's son,  
Arthur Plantagenet, lays most lawful claim

<sup>3</sup> *In my behaviour*] In my person. Cf. V, ii, 129, *infra*: "For thus his  
royalty doth speak in me."

To this fair island and the territories, 10  
 To Ireland, Poitiers, Anjou, Touraine, Maine,  
 Desiring thee to lay aside the sword  
 Which sways usurpingly these several titles,  
 And put the same into young Arthur's hand,  
 Thy nephew and right royal sovereign.

K. JOHN. What follows if we disallow of this?

CHAT. The proud control of fierce and bloody war,  
 To enforce these rights so forcibly withheld.

K. JOHN. Here have we war for war and blood for  
 blood,  
 Controlment for controlment: so answer France. 20

CHAT. Then take my king's defiance from my mouth,  
 The farthest limit of my embassy.

K. JOHN. Bear mine to him, and so depart in  
 peace:  
 Be thou as lightning in the eyes of France;  
 For ere thou canst report I will be there,  
 The thunder of my cannon shall be heard:  
 So hence! Be thou the trumpet of our wrath  
 And sullen presage of your own decay.  
 An honourable conduct let him have.  
 Pembroke, look to 't. Farewell, Chatillon. 30

*[Exeunt Chatillon and Pembroke.]*

17 *control*] coercion, compulsion. Cf. line 20, *infra*, "controlment."

26 *cannon*] Shakespeare, characteristically indifferent to strict historical accuracy, antedates the use of gunpowder (as in II, i, 210, seq. *infra*) by nearly a century and a half. John's reign began in 1199. Cannon are said to have been first employed at the battle of Crécy in 1346.

28 *sullen presage*] (messenger of) doleful foreboding.

ELI. What now, my son! have I not ever said  
How that ambitious Constance would not cease  
Till she had kindled France and all the world,  
Upon the right and party of her son?  
This might have been prevented and made whole  
With very easy arguments of love,  
Which now the manage of two kingdoms must  
With fearful bloody issue arbitrate.

K. JOHN. Our strong possession and our right for us.

ELI. Your strong possession much more than your  
right, 40

Or else it must go wrong with you and me:  
So much my conscience whispers in your ear,  
Which none but heaven and you and I shall hear.

*Enter a Sheriff*

ESSEX. My liege, here is the strangest controversy  
Come from the country to be judged by you,  
That e'er I heard: shall I produce the men?

K. JOHN. Let them approach.  
Our abbeyes and our priories shall pay  
This expedition's charge.

*Enter ROBERT FAULCONBRIDGE, and PHILIP his bastard brother*

What men are you?

BAST. Your faithful subject I, a gentleman 50  
Born in Northamptonshire, and eldest son,  
As I suppose, to Robert Faulconbridge,  
A soldier, by the honour-giving hand  
Of Cœur-de-lion knighted in the field.

---

37 *manage*] management, administration, government.



K. JOHN. What art thou?

ROB. The son and heir to that same Faulconbridge.

K. JOHN. Is that the elder, and art thou the heir?

You came not of one mother then, it seems.

BAST. Most certain of one mother, mighty king;  
That is well known; and, as I think, one father: 60  
But for the certain knowledge of that truth  
I put you o'er to heaven and to my mother:  
Of that I doubt, as all men's children may.

ELI. Out on thee, rude man! thou dost shame thy  
mother

And wound her honour with this diffidence.

BAST. I, madam? no, I have no reason for it;  
That is my brother's plea and none of mine;  
The which if he can prove, a' pops me out  
At least from fair five hundred pound a year:  
Heaven guard my mother's honour and my land! 70

K. JOHN. A good blunt fellow. Why, being younger  
born,

Doth he lay claim to thine inheritance?

BAST. I know not why, except to get the land.  
But once he slander'd me with bastardy:  
But whether I be as true begot or no,  
That still I lay upon my mother's head;  
But that I am as well begot, my liege, —

62 *put you o'er*] refer you.

65 *diffidence*] distrust.

75 *whether*] pronounced in Shakespeare's time as a monosyllable. The first three Folios read *where*, which the Fourth Folio first expanded into the ordinary spelling.

Fair fall the bones that took the pains for me! —  
Compare our faces and be judge yourself.

If old Sir Robert did beget us both 80  
And were our father and this son like him,  
O old Sir Robert, father, on my knee  
I give heaven thanks I was not like to thee!

K. JOHN. Why, what a madcap hath heaven lent us  
here!

ELI. He hath a trick of Cœur-de-lion's face;  
The accent of his tongue affecteth him.  
Do you not read some tokens of my son  
In the large composition of this man?

K. JOHN. Mine eye hath well examined his parts  
And finds them perfect Richard. Sirrah, speak, 90  
What doth move you to claim your brother's land?

BAST. Because he hath a half-face, like my father.  
With half that face would he have all my land:  
A half-faced groat five hundred pound a year!

ROB. My gracious liege, when that my father lived,  
Your brother did employ my father much, —

BAST. Well, sir, by this you cannot get my land:  
Your tale must be how he employ'd my mother.

ROB. And once dispatch'd him in an embassy  
To Germany, there with the emperor 100  
To treat of high affairs touching that time.

78 *Fair fall*] Luck befall.

85 *trick*] trace; the word is a heraldic term for a tracing or copy.

86 *affecteth*] smacks of, resembles.

94 *groat*] a small silver coin (worth fourpence) stamped with the king's head in profile or half-face. Such coins were first issued by Henry VII.

The advantage of his absence took the king  
And in the mean time sojourn'd at my father's;  
Where how he did prevail I shame to speak,  
But truth is truth: large lengths of seas and shores  
Between my father and my mother lay,  
As I have heard my father speak himself,  
When this same lusty gentleman was got.  
Upon his death-bed he by will bequeath'd  
His lands to me, and took it on his death  
That this my mother's son was none of his;  
And if he were, he came into the world  
Full fourteen weeks before the course of time.  
Then, good my liege, let me have what is mine,  
My father's land, as was my father's will.

110

K. JOHN. Sirrah, your brother is legitimate;  
Your father's wife did after wedlock bear him,  
And if she did play false, the fault was hers;  
Which fault lies on the hazards of all husbands  
That marry wives. Tell me, how if my brother,  
Who, as you say, took pains to get this son,  
Had of your father claim'd this son for his?  
In sooth, good friend, your father might have kept  
This calf, bred from his cow, from all the world;  
In sooth he might; then, if he were my brother's,  
My brother might not claim him; nor your father,  
Being none of his, refuse him: this concludes;

120

110 *took it on his death*] affirmed it on his deathbed, in the solemn expectation of death.

119 *lies . . . husbands*] is among the risks all husbands run.

127 *concludes*] is conclusive.

My mother's son did get your father's heir;  
Your father's heir must have your father's land.

ROB. Shall then my father's will be of no force      130  
To dispossess that child which is not his?

BAST. Of no more force to dispossess me, sir,  
Than was his will to get me, as I think.

ELI. Whether hadst thou rather be a Faulconbridge,  
And like thy brother, to enjoy thy land,  
Or the reputed son of Cœur de-lion,  
Lord of thy presence and no land beside?

BAST. Madam, an if my brother had my shape,  
And I had his, sir Robert's his, like him;  
And if my legs were two such riding-rods,      140  
My arms such eel-skins stuff'd, my face so thin  
That in mine ear I durst not stick a rose  
Lest men should say "Look, where three-farthings  
                                 goes!"  
And, to his shape, were heir to all this land,

137 *Lord of thy presence*] Owner of thy fine presence or person. Cf. II, i, 367, *infra*, where the king describes himself as "Lord of our presence."

139 *his, sir Robert's his*] The speaker accentuates his breezy scorn of Sir Robert's person by using "his" like a substantive, which connotes all the feebleness of Sir Robert's frame.

140 *riding-rods*] thin wands used by horsemen; riding whips.

142 *rose*] Fashionable Elizabethans seem to have occasionally worn roses or other flowers in their pierced ears. The Bastard refers to this practice rather than to another and a more common custom of tying rosettes of ribbon about the ear.

143 *three-farthings*] a very thin silver coin of Queen Elizabeth's day, on the reverse of which a rose was stamped.

144 *to his shape, were heir*] in addition to his shape, were he heir.

# KING JOHN

## ACT I

Would I might never stir from off this place,  
I would give it every foot to have this face;  
I would not be sir Nob in any case.

ELI. I like thee well: wilt thou forsake thy fortune,  
Bequeath thy land to him and follow me?

I am a soldier and now bound to France. 150

BAST. Brother, take you my land, I'll take my  
chance.

Your face hath got five hundred pound a year,  
Yet sell your face for five pence and 't is dear.

Madam, I'll follow you unto the death.

ELI. Nay, I would have you go before me thither.

BAST. Our country manners give our betters way.

K. JOHN. What is thy name?

BAST. Philip, my liege, so is my name begun;  
Philip, good old sir Robert's wife's eldest son.

K. JOHN. From henceforth bear his name whose  
form thou bear'st: 160

Kneel thou down Philip, but rise more great,  
Arise sir Richard and Plantagenet.

BAST. Brother by the mother's side, give me your  
hand:

My father gave me honour, yours gave land.  
Now blessed be the hour, by night or day,  
When I was got, sir Robert was away!

ELI. The very spirit of Plantagenet!  
I am thy grandam, Richard; call me so.

147 *sir Nob*] a nickname for Sir Robert.

153 *your face for five pence*] a penny more than the worth of "a half-faced groat." The banter carries on the suggestion of line 94.

BAST. Madam, by chance but not by truth; what,  
though?

Something about, a little from the right, 170

In at the window, or else o'er the hatch:  
Who dares not stir by day must walk by night,  
And have is have, however men do catch:  
Near or far off, well won is still well shot,  
And I am I, howe'er I was begot.

K. JOHN. Go, Faulconbridge: now hast thou thy  
desire;

A landless knight makes thee a landed squire.  
Come, madam, and come, Richard, we must speed  
For France, for France, for it is more than need.

BAST. Brother, adieu: good fortune come to thee! 180  
For thou wast got i' the way of honesty.

[*Exeunt all but Bastard.*]

A foot of honour better than I was;  
But many a many foot of land the worse.  
Well, now can I make any Joan a lady.  
"Good den, sir Richard!" — "God-a-mercy, fellow!" —  
And if his name be George, I'll call him Peter;  
For new-made honour doth forget men's names;

170 *Something about . . . right*] Somewhat deviously, a little off the  
straight path, left-handedly.

171 *In . . . hatch*] Colloquial euphemisms for illegitimate birth. "The  
hatch" is the half-door. Cf. V, ii, 138, *infra*, "take the hatch," i. e.,  
take a hurried departure.

177 *A landless knight*] A reference to John's familiar nickname of  
Lacklands.

184 *Joan a lady*] Cf. *L. L. L.*, III, i, 195, "Some men must love *my*  
*lady*, and some *Joan*."

185 *Good den*] Good evening.

'T is too respective and too sociable  
 For your conversion. Now your traveller,  
 He and his toothpick at my worship's mess, 190  
 And when my knightly stomach is sufficed,  
 Why then I suck my teeth and catechize  
 My picked man of countries: "My dear sir,"  
 Thus, leaning on mine elbow, I begin,  
 "I shall beseech you" — that is question now;  
 And then comes answer like an Absey book:  
 "O sir," says answer, "at your best command;  
 At your employment; 'at your service, sir:'"  
 "No, sir," says question, "I, sweet sir, at yours:" 200  
 And so, ere answer knows what question would,  
 Saving in dialogue of compliment,  
 And talking of the Alps and Apennines,  
 The Pyrenean and the river Po,  
 It draws towards supper in conclusion so.  
 But this is worshipful society,

188-189 *too respective and too sociable* For your conversion] too considerate (of the feelings of inferiors) and too suggestive of social equality to suit a change from low to high estate.

190 *his toothpick*] obtrusive play with the toothpick was a current affectation of travelled men of fashion. Cf. Overbury's *Characters*, 1616. — Of an affected Traveller: "His *toothpick* is a main part of his behaviour."

*my worship's mess*] my dining table.

193 *picked*] refined, fastidious. Cf. *Hamlet*, V, i, 136: "the age is grown so *picked*."

196 *an Absey book*] an A. B. C. book, a primer from which children learnt the alphabet and simple phrases.

201 *dialogue of compliment*] talk consisting of complimentary phrases.

203 *The Pyrenean*] The Pyrenees.

And fits the mounting spirit like myself;  
 For he is but a bastard to the time  
 That doth not smack of observation;  
 And so am I, whether I smack or no;  
 And not alone in habit and device,  
 Exterior form, outward accoutrement,  
 But from the inward motion to deliver  
 Sweet, sweet, sweet poison for the age's tooth:  
 Which, though I will not practise to deceive,  
 Yet, to avoid deceit, I mean to learn;  
 For it shall strew the footsteps of my rising.  
 But who comes in such haste in riding-robcs?  
 What woman-post is this? hath she no husband  
 That will take pains to blow a horn before her?

210

*Enter LADY FAULCONBRIDGE and JAMES GURNEY*

O me! it is my mother. How now, good lady?  
 What brings you here to court so hastily?

220

207-208 *For he is . . . of observation*] For he is no lawful offspring of the age — he is a mean fellow in the estimate of contemporaries — who does not show signs of having observed or studied foreign customs.

208-209 *smack . . . smack*] The Folios read *smoke* (variously spelt) in the first place and *smack* in the second. Theobald first read *smack* [*i. e.*, savour] in both places.

212-213 *from the inward . . . age's tooth*] proceeding from, or owing to the inward impulse to please the palate of the age with the extremely sweet poison of flattery.

215 *to avoid deceit*] to avoid being misled by other people's deceit, to make myself a match for the cheat.

219 *a horn*] a quibble on the obvious meaning of "post horn" and of the "horns" which a wife's infidelity was commonly said to cause to sprout from a husband's brow.



# KING JOHN

## ACT I

LADY F. Where is that slave, thy brother? where  
is he,

That holds in chase mine honour up and down?

BAST. My brother Robert? old sir Robert's son?  
Colbrand the giant, that same mighty man?  
Is it sir Robert's son that you seek so?

LADY F. Sir Robert's son! Ay, thou unreverend boy,  
Sir Robert's son: why scorn'st thou at sir Robert?  
He is sir Robert's son, and so art thou.

BAST. James Gurney, wilt thou give us leave awhile?

GUR. Good leave, good Philip.

BAST. Philip! sparrow: James, 231  
There's toys abroad: anon I'll tell thee more.

[Exit Gurney.]

Madam, I was not old sir Robert's son:

225 *Colbrand the giant*] A legendary Danish hero, whose overthrow in  
combat was one of the exploits traditionally assigned to Guy of  
Warwick. Cf. *Hen. VIII*, V, iv, 20. "I am not Samson nor  
Sir Guy nor *Colbrand*."

227 *unreverend*] irreverent.

230 *James Gurney*] Shakespeare may have called this small personage,  
whom he invented, after Hugues Gournay, a Norman squire, whose  
land in Normandy King John seized very early in his adventures  
in France.

*give us leave*] withdraw.

231 *Good leave*] with all good-will. This is the only line assigned to  
James Gurney, and it seems fantastic in Coleridge and Charles  
Lamb to detect any peculiarly dramatic point in the words.

*Philip! sparrow*] Tut! Don't take me for a sparrow. Philip was  
the common nickname of the sparrow, the chirp of the bird being  
thought to resemble the articulation of the word Philip.

232 *toys*] idle tales, worthless rumours.

Sir Robert might have eat his part in me  
 Upon Good-Friday and ne'er broke his fast:  
 Sir Robert could do well: marry, to confess,  
 Could he get me? Sir Robert could not do it:  
 We know his handiwork: therefore, good mother,  
 To whom am I beholding for these limbs?  
 Sir Robert never help to make this leg. 240

LADY F. Hast thou conspired with thy brother too,  
 That for thine own gain shouldest defend mine honour?  
 What means this scorn, thou most untoward knave?

BAST. Knight, knight, good mother, Basilisco-like.  
 What! I am dubb'd! I have it on my shoulder.  
 But, mother, I am not sir Robert's son;  
 I have disclaim'd sir Robert and my land;  
 Legitimation, name and all is gone:  
 Then, good my mother, let me know my father;  
 Some proper man, I hope: who was it, mother? 250

LADY F. Hast thou denied thyself a Faulconbridge?

BAST. As faithfully as I deny the devil.

LADY F. King Richard Cœur-de-lion was thy father:  
 By long and vehement suit I was seduced  
 To make room for him in my husband's bed:

234-235 *eat his part . . . his fast*] a proverbial expression implying the negation of action.

236 *to confess*] to come to confession, to make a clean breast of it.

243 *untoward*] unmannerly.

244 *Basilisco-like*] a sarcastic allusion to a braggart named Basilisco in the contemporary play of *Soliman and Perseda* (cf. Dodsley's *Old Plays*, Ed. Hazlitt, V, 271-272); Basilisco bombastically insists on being addressed as "*knight*" by a farcical servant who mockingly calls him "*knave*."

Heaven lay not my transgression to my charge!  
 Thou art the issue of my dear offence,  
 Which was so strongly urged past my defence.

BAST. Now, by this light, were I to get again,  
 Madam, I would not wish a better father. 260

Some sins do bear their privilege on earth,  
 And so doth yours; your fault was not your folly:  
 Needs must you lay your heart at his dispose,  
 Subjected tribute to commanding love,  
 Against whose fury and unmatched force  
 The aweless lion could not wage the fight,  
 Nor keep his princely heart from Richard's hand.  
 He that perforce robs lions of their hearts  
 May easily win a woman's. Ay, my mother,  
 With all my heart I thank thee for my father! 270  
 Who lives and dares but say thou didst not well  
 When I was got, I'll send his soul to hell.

Come, lady, I will show thee to my kin;  
 And they shall say, when Richard me begot,  
 If thou hadst said him nay, it had been sin:  
 Who says it was, he lies; I say 't was not. [*Exeunt.*]

257 *dear*] grievous.

261 *Some sins . . . earth*] Some sins (despite the punishment allotted them by heaven) are privileged to pass uncensured on earth.

266-267 *The aweless . . . hand*] A reference to the fable that Richard I owed his surname Cœur-de-lion to his having pulled out through the mouth the heart of a lion, which was let loose upon him while he was in prison. Cf. II, i, 3, *infra*.

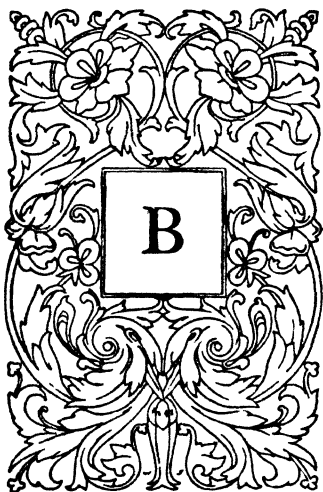


ACT SECOND — SCENE I — FRANCE

BEFORE ANGIERS

*Enter AUSTRIA and forces, drums, etc. on one side : on the other  
KING PHILIP of France and his power ; LEWIS, ARTHUR,  
CONSTANCE and attendants*

LEWIS



BEFORE ANGIERS WELL  
met, brave Austria.

Arthur, that great forerunner of  
thy blood,

Richard, that robb'd the lion of  
his heart

And fought the holy wars in  
Palestine,

By this brave duke came early  
to his grave :

And for amends to his posterity,  
At our importance hither is he  
come,

To spread his colours, boy, in thy behalf,  
And to rebuke the usurpation

1 *Lewis*] The Folios assign this speech to Prince Lewis, the Dauphin, but  
Theobald suggested that so self-sufficient an utterance could only

Of thy unnatural uncle, English John: 10  
Embrace him, love him, give him welcome hither.

ARTH. God shall forgive you Cœur-de-lion's death  
The rather that you give his offspring life,  
Shadowing their right under your wings of war:  
I give you welcome with a powerless hand,  
But with a heart full of unstained love:  
Welcome before the gates of Angiers, duke.

LEW. A noble boy! Who would not do thee right?

AUST. Upon thy cheek lay I this zealous kiss, 20  
As seal to this indenture of my love,  
That to my home I will no more return,  
Till Angiers and the right thou hast in France,  
Together with that pale, that white-faced shore,  
Whose foot spurns back the ocean's roaring tides  
And coops from other lands her islanders,

---

have issued from the prince's father, King Philip. Many editors accept Theobald's suggestion.

2 *forerunner*] predecessor.

3 *Richard, . . . of his heart*] Cf. I, i, 266-7, *supra*, and note.

5 *By this brave duke . . . grave*] Shakespeare follows the old play in the error of making Richard fall by the hand of the Archduke of Austria, to whom the king owed his famous imprisonment. The archduke predeceased Richard I. The king was slain four years after his captor's death while besieging the castle of the Vicomte de Limoges, one of his own vassals. The Archduke of Austria and the Vicomte de Limoges were two very different beings, but at III, i, 114, *infra*, "Limoges" and "Austria" are confusedly introduced as the titles of one and the same person; they figure in like fashion in the *dramatis personæ*.

7 *At our importance*] At our importunity, entreaty.

20 *indenture*] binding contract.

23 *that pale . . . shore*] the white cliffs of Albion.

# KING JOHN

30

Aust. The peace of heaven is theirs that lift their  
swords

K. PHI. Well then, to work: our cannon shall be bent  
Against the brows of this resisting town.

40

CONST. Stay for an answer to your embassy,  
Lest unadvised you stain your swords with blood:  
My Lord Chatillon may from England bring  
That right in peace which here we urge in war,  
And then we shall repent each drop of blood  
That hot rash haste so indirectly shed.

40 *To cull . . . advantages*] To select the positions of best advantage  
for the assault.

49 *indirectly*] unrighteously.

*Enter* CHATILLON

K. PHI. A wonder, lady ! lo, upon thy wish, 50  
 Our messenger Chatillon is arrived !  
 What England says, say briefly, gentle lord ;  
 We coldly pause for thee ; Chatillon, speak.

CHAT. Then turn your forces from this paltry siege  
 And stir them up against a mightier task.  
 England, impatient of your just demands,  
 Hath put himself in arms : the adverse winds,  
 Whose leisure I have stay'd, have given him time  
 To land his legions all as soon as I ;  
 His marches are expedient to this town, 60  
 His forces strong, his soldiers confident.  
 With him along is come the mother-queen,  
 An Ate, stirring him to blood and strife ;  
 With her her niece, the Lady Blanch of Spain ;  
 With them a bastard of the king's deceased ;  
 And all the unsettled humours of the land,  
 Rash, inconsiderate, fiery voluntaries,  
 With ladies' faces and fierce dragons' spleens,

60 *expedient*] expeditious, rapid. Cf. line 223, *infra*, "*expedient* march."

63 *Ate*] The goddess of revenge or hate, belonging to Greek mythology (cf. Homer's *Iliad*, xix, 91, *seq.*). Rowe's correction of the Folio reading *Ace*.

64 *her niece, the Lady Blanch*] daughter of John's sister Elinor, who was married to Alphonso VIII, king of Castile; hence John's *niece* and his mother Queen Elinor's *granddaughter*. Cf. lines 424, 469, and 521, *infra*.

65 *of the king's deceased*] of the deceased king's. The expression is drawn directly from the old play.

67 *voluntaries*] volunteers.

Have sold their fortunes at their native homes,  
Bearing their birthrights proudly on their backs, 70  
To make a hazard of new fortunes here:  
In brief, a braver choice of dauntless spirits  
Than now the English bottoms have waft o'er  
Did never float upon the swelling tide,  
To do offence and scath in Christendom. [*Drum beats.*  
The interruption of their churlish drums  
Cuts off more circumstance: they are at hand,  
To parley or to fight; therefore prepare.

K. PHI. How much unlook'd for is this expedition!

AUST. By how much unexpected, by so much 80  
We must awake endeavour for defence;  
For courage mounteth with occasion:  
Let them be welcome then; we are prepared.

*Enter KING JOHN, ELINOR, BLANCH, the Bastard, Lords, and Forces*

K. JOHN. Peace be to France, if France in peace  
permit

Our just and lineal entrance to our own;  
If not, bleed France, and peace ascend to heaven,  
Whiles we, God's wrathful agent, do correct  
Their proud contempt that beats His peace to heaven.

K. PHI. Peace be to England, if that war return  
From France to England, there to live in peace. 90  
England we love; and for that England's sake

70 *Bearing . . . backs*] Cf. *Hen. VIII*, I, i, 83-84: "O, many Have  
broke *their backs* with laying manors on 'em."

75 *scath*] harm, destruction; as in the modern "*scathe-less*."

77 *circumstance*] circumstantial detail.



With burden of our armour here we sweat.  
 This toil of ours should be a work of thine;  
 But thou from loving England art so far,  
 That thou hast under-wrought his lawful king,  
 Cut off the sequence of posterity,  
 Out-faced infant state and done a rape  
 Upon the maiden virtue of the crown.  
 Look here upon thy brother Geffrey's face;  
 These eyes, these brows, were moulded out of his: 100  
 This little abstract doth contain that large  
 Which died in Geffrey, and the hand of time  
 Shall draw this brief into as huge a volume,  
 That Geffrey was thy elder brother born,  
 And this his son; England was Geffrey's right,  
 And this is Geffrey's: in the name of God  
 How comes it then that thou art call'd a king,  
 When living blood doth in these temples beat,  
 Which owe the crown that thou o'ermasterest?

K. JOHN. From whom hast thou this great commis-  
 sion, France, 110

To draw my answer from thy articles?

K. PHI. From that supernal judge, that stirs good  
 thoughts

In any breast of strong authority,

95 *under-wrought*] undermined, supplanted.

97 *Out-faced*] Insulted, brazenly affronted.

106 *this is Geffrey's*] Thus the Folios. The meaning is that this right  
 to England (which Arthur claims) is Geffrey's right (which Arthur  
 inherits). A widely adopted change (due to Mason) reads *his is*  
*Geffrey's*, meaning that Arthur is now owner of what belonged to  
 Geffrey, his father.

109 *owe*] own, possess.

To look into the blots and stains of right:  
That judge hath made me guardian to this boy:  
Under whose warrant I impeach thy wrong,  
And by whose help I mean to chastise it.

K. JOHN. Alack, thou dost usurp authority.

K. PHI. Excuse; it is to beat usurping down.

ELI. Who is it thou dost call usurper, France? 120

CONST. Let me make answer; thy usurping son.

ELI. Out, insolent! thy bastard shall be king,  
That thou mayst be a queen, and check the world!

CONST. My bed was ever to thy son as true  
As thine was to thy husband; and this boy  
Liker in feature to his father Geoffrey  
Than thou and John in manners; being as like  
As rain to water, or devil to his dam.

My boy a bastard! By my soul, I think  
His father never was so true begot: 130  
It cannot be, an if thou wert his mother.

ELI. There's a good mother, boy, that blots thy  
father.

CONST. There's a good grandam, boy, that would  
blot thee.

AUST. Peace!

114 *blots and stains*] an allusion to the heraldic signs of bastardy.

"Blot" is used thus (as a verb) in lines 132-133, *infra*. See also

III, i, 45, *infra*: "Full of unpleasing *blots* and sightless *stains*."

123 *a queen, and check the world*] an allusion to the queen's check in  
the game of chess.

131 *an if thou wert his mother*] John's mother, Queen Elinor, had been  
divorced for infidelity by her first husband Louis VII of France,  
before she married Henry II of England.

# KING JOHN

## ACT II

BAST. Hear the crier.

AUST. What the devil art thou?

BAST. One that will play the devil, sir, with  
you,

An a' may catch your hide and you alone:

You are the hare of whom the proverb goes,

Whose valour plucks dead lions by the beard:

I'll smoke your skin-coat, an I catch you right;

Sirrah, look to 't; i' faith, I will, i' faith.

140

BLANCH. O, well did he become that lion's robe  
That did disrobe the lion of that robe!

BAST. It lies as sightly on the back of him

As great Alcides' shows upon an ass:

But, ass, I'll take that burthen from your back,

Or lay on that shall make your shoulders crack.

AUST. What cracker is this same that deafs our  
ears

134 *Hear the crier*] The crier was the official who proclaimed silence in courts of justice. Austria has just cried "Peace!" (line 134).

136 *your hide and you*] An allusion to the tradition that the Duke of Austria robbed his prisoner Richard I of a lion's hide, which the duke thenceforth himself wore.

137-138 *the hare . . . the beard*] The familiar proverb is thus cited in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, I, ii, 172. "So hares may pull dead lions by the beard."

139 *smoke your skin-coat*] beat your skin soundly.

144 *great Alcides'*] great Hercules' robe (made out of the skin of the Nemean lion).

*shows*] Theobald's emendation of the ambiguous spelling *shooes* of the First Folio.

147 *cracker*] braggart. The verb "crack," to boast, is often found in Elizabethan literature.

With this abundance of superfluous breath?

King Philip, determine what we shall do straight.

K. PHIL. Women and fools, break off your conference.

King John, this is the very sum of all; 151

England and Ireland, Anjou, Touraine, Maine,

In right of Arthur do I claim of thee:

Wilt thou resign them and lay down thy arms?

K. JOHN. My life as soon: I do defy thee, France.

Arthur of Bretagne, yield thee to my hand;

And out of my dear love I'll give thee more

Than e'er the coward hand of France can win:

Submit thee, boy.

ELI. Come to thy grandam, child.

CONST. Do, child, go to it grandam, child; 160

Give grandam kingdom, and it grandam will

Give it a plum, a cherry, and a fig:

There's a good grandam.

ARTH. Good my mother, peace!

I would that I were low laid in my grave:

I am not worth this coil that's made for me.

ELI. His mother shames him so, poor boy, he weeps.

149 *King Philip*] Theobald's essential emendation of the Folio reading  
*King Lewis*. Austria is clearly appealing to the French king, not  
to his son, to whom the Folios wrongly assign the next speech.

152 *Anjou*] Theobald's emendation of the Folios' *Angiers*. Cf. line  
487, *infra*.

160 *it grandam*] its grandam. Constance mimics the baby-language of  
the grandmother; but "it" was occasionally used as a possessive  
pronoun in serious speech. "His" was in Elizabethan English the  
ordinary form of "its," which is rarely met with.

165 *coil*] fuss, commotion.

CONST. Now shame upon you, whether she does or no !  
 His grandam's wrongs, and not his mother's shames,  
 Draws those heaven-moving pearls from his poor eyes,  
 Which heaven shall take in nature of a fee ; 170  
 Ay, with these crystal beads heaven shall be bribed  
 To do him justice and revenge on you.

ELI. Thou monstrous slanderer of heaven and earth !

CONST. Thou monstrous injurer of heaven and earth !  
 Call not me slanderer ; thou and thine usurp  
 The dominations, royalties and rights  
 Of this oppressed boy : this is thy eld'st son's son,  
 Infortunate in nothing but in thee :  
 Thy sins are visited in this poor child ;  
 The canon of the law is laid on him, 180  
 Being but the second generation  
 Removed from thy sin-conceiving womb.

K. JOHN. Bedlam, have done.

CONST. I have but this to say,  
 That he is not only plagued for her sin,  
 But God hath made her sin and her the plague  
 On this removed issue, plagued for her  
 And with her plague ; her sin his injury,  
 Her injury the beadle to her sin,

168 *His grandam's wrongs*] Wrongs done by his grandam.

180 *The canon of the law*] The sins of fathers shall be visited on the children "unto the third and fourth generation" according to the Jewish law recorded in Exodus xx, 5.

183 *Bedlam*] woman of the madhouse, *i. e.*, Bedlam or Bethlehem hospital.

185-189 *But God hath made . . . of this child*] The punctuation of this difficult passage in the First Folio is hopeless. With the revised

All punish'd in the person of this child,  
And all for her; a plague upon her! 190

ELI. Thou unadvised scold, I can produce  
A will that bars the title of thy son.

CONST. Ay, who doubts that? a will! a wicked will;  
A woman's will; a canker'd grandam's will!

K. PHI. Peace, lady! pause, or be more temperate:  
It ill beseems this presence to cry aim  
To these ill-tuned repetitions.

Some trumpet summon hither to the walls  
These men of Angiers: let us hear them speak  
Whose title they admit, Arthur's or John's. 200

*Trumpet sounds. Enter certain CITIZENS upon the walls*

FIRST CIT. Who is it that hath warn'd us to the  
walls?

K. PHI. 'T is France, for England.

K. JOHN. England, for itself.  
You men of Angiers, and my loving subjects, —

punctuation adopted here the meaning seems to be: "God hath made her sin and herself alike a curse on this distant kinsman of hers, who is afflicted both by the punishment allotted her, and also by the punishment which she inflicts on him; her sin brings Arthur injury; her injurious conduct inflicts on the boy (like a beadle who punishes youthful offenders) the punishment incurred by her offence. Arthur is in every way her scapegoat.

191 *unadvised*] rash. Cf. line 45, *supra*, and V, ii, 132, *infra*.

196 *cry aim*] give encouragement; a term in archery applied to those who stand by the archer bidding him to what point to direct his aim. Cf. *M. Wives*, III, ii, 37: "to these violent proceedings all my neighbours shall *cry aim*."

K. PHI. You loving men of Angiers, Arthur's subjects,  
Our trumpet call'd you to this gentle parle, —

K. JOHN. For our advantage; therefore hear us first.  
These flags of France, that are advanced here  
Before the eye and prospect of your town,  
Have hither march'd to your endamagement:  
The cannons have their bowels full of wrath, 210  
And ready mounted are they to spit forth  
Their iron indignation 'gainst your walls:  
All preparation for a bloody siege  
And merciless proceeding by these French  
Confronts your city's eyes, your winking gates;  
And but for our approach those sleeping stones,  
That as a waist doth girdle you about,  
By the compulsion of their ordinance  
By this time from their fixed beds of lime 220  
Had been dishabited, and wide havoc made  
For bloody power to rush upon your peace.  
But on the sight of us your lawful king,  
Who painfully with much expedient march  
Have brought a countercheck before your gates,  
To save unscratch'd your city's threatened cheeks,  
Behold, the French amazed vouchsafe a parle;  
And now, instead of bullets wrapp'd in fire,

209 *endamagement*] loss. Shakespeare only uses the word here, but the verb "to endamage" (*i. e.*, to injure) is found in *Two Gent.* III, ii, 43, and *1 Hen.* VI, II, i, 77.

215 *winking*] closed (in sleep).

218 *ordinance*] ordnance, artillery.

220 *dishabited*] dislodged.

223 *expedient*] expeditious, rapid. Cf. line 60, *supra*.

To make a shaking fever in your walls,  
 They shoot but calm words folded up in smoke,  
 To make a faithless error in your ears: 230  
 Which trust accordingly, kind citizens,  
 And let us in, your king, whose labour'd spirits,  
 Forwearied in this action of swift speed,  
 Crave harbourage within your city walls.

K. PHI. When I have said, make answer to us  
 both.

Lo, in this right hand, whose protection  
 Is most divinely vow'd upon the right  
 Of him it holds, stands young Plantagenet,  
 Son to the elder brother of this man,  
 And king o'er him and all that he enjoys: 240  
 For this down-trodden equity, we tread  
 In warlike march these greens before your town,  
 Being no further enemy to you  
 Than the constraint of hospitable zeal  
 In the relief of this oppressed child  
 Religiously provokes. Be pleased then  
 To pay that duty which you truly owe  
 To him that owes it, namely this young prince:  
 And then our arms, like to a muzzled bear,

229 *words folded up in smoke*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 1027: "This helpless *smoke of words*."

230 *To make . . . in your ears*] To cause you to be deceived, to lead you into an error of disloyalty.

233 *Forwearied*] Outwearied, worn out.

242 *greens*] meadows.

247-248 *owe . . . owes*] "owe" is first used here in its ordinary modern sense, and then in its old sense of "own."



Save in aspect, hath all offence seal'd up; 250  
 Our cannons' malice vainly shall be spent  
 Against the invulnerable clouds of heaven;  
 And with a blessed and unvex'd retire,  
 With unhack'd swords and helmets all unbruised,  
 We will bear home that lusty blood again,  
 Which here we came to spout against your town,  
 And leave your children, wives and you in peace.  
 But if you fondly pass our proffer'd offer,  
 'T is not the roundure of your old-faced walls  
 Can hide you from our messengers of war, 260  
 Though all these English and their discipline  
 Were harbour'd in their rude circumference.  
 Then tell us, shall your city call us lord,  
 In that behalf which we have challenged it?  
 Or shall we give the signal to our rage  
 And stalk in blood to our possession?

FIRST CIT. In brief, we are the king of England's subjects:

For him, and in his right, we hold this town.

K. JOHN. Acknowledge then the king, and let me in.

FIRST CIT. That can we not; but he that proves the king, 270

To him will we prove loyal: till that time  
 Have we ramm'd up our gates against the world.

253 *retire*] withdrawal, retreat. Cf. line 326, *infra*.

259 *roundure*] round, circle. A French word which the Folios spell *rounder*; also used by Shakespeare in *Sonnet*, xxi, 8: "That heaven's air in this huge *rondure* hems."

272 *ramm'd up*] closed by means of wedges driven into the apertures by battering-rams.

K. JOHN. Doth not the crown of England prove the king?

And if not that, I bring you witnesses,  
Twice fifteen thousand hearts of England's breed, —

BAST. Bastards, and else.

K. JOHN. To verify our title with their lives.

K. PHI. As many and as well-born bloods as those —

BAST. Some bastards too.

K. PHI. Stand in his face to contradict his claim. 280

FIRST CIT. Till you compound whose right is worthiest,

We for the worthiest hold the right from both.

K. JOHN. Then God forgive the sin of all those souls  
That to their everlasting residence,  
Before the dew of evening fall, shall fleet,  
In dreadful trial of our kingdom's king!

K. PHI. Amen, amen! Mount, chevaliers! to arms!

BAST. Saint George, that swinged the dragon, and  
e'er since

Sits on his horse back at mine hostess' door,  
Teach us some fence! [*To Aust.*] Sirrah, were I at home,  
At your den, sirrah, with your lioness, 291  
I would set an ox-head to your lion's hide,  
And make a monster of you.

AUST. Peace! no more.

BAST. O, tremble, for you hear the lion roar.

---

278 *bloods*] men of spirit, gallants. Cf. 461, *infra*: "this lusty blood."

288-289 *Saint George . . . at mine hostess' door*] St. George and the dragon was a very common tavern sign.

293 *make a monster of you*] Cf. *Oth.*, IV, i, 62: "A horned man's a monster."

# KING JOHN

## ACT II

K. JOHN. Up higher to the plain; where we'll set forth

In best appointment all our regiments.

BAST. Speed then, to take advantage of the field.

K. PHI. It shall be so; and at the other hill  
Command the rest to stand. God and our right!

[*Exeunt.*]

*Here after excursions, enter the Herald of France, with trumpets, to the gates*

F. HER. You men of Angiers, open wide your gates,  
And let young Arthur, Duke of Bretagne, in, 301  
Who by the hand of France this day hath made  
Much work for tears in many an English mother,  
Whose sons lie scattered on the bleeding ground:  
Many a widow's husband grovelling lies,  
Coldly embracing the discoloured earth;  
And victory, with little loss, doth play  
Upon the dancing banners of the French,  
Who are at hand, triumphantly display'd,  
To enter conquerors, and to proclaim 310  
Arthur of Bretagne England's king and yours.

*Enter English Herald, with trumpet*

E. HER. Rejoice, you men of Angiers, ring your bells;  
King John, your king and England's, doth approach,  
Commander of this hot malicious day:

---

299 (Stage direction) *Here after excursions*] Most editors begin a new scene here, but the initial word *Here* suggests that there is no division.

314 *hot*] hotly (or fiercely) contested (or fought).

Their armours, that march'd hence so silver-bright,  
 Hither return all gilt with Frenchmen's blood;  
 There stuck no plume in any English crest  
 That is removed by a staff of France;  
 Our colours do return in those same hands  
 That did display them when we first march'd forth; 320  
 And, like a jolly troop of huntsmen, come  
 Our lusty English, all with purpled hands,  
 Dyed in the dying slaughter of their foes:  
 Open your gates and give the victors way.

FIRST CIT. Heralds, from off our towers we might  
 behold,  
 From first to last, the onset and retire  
 Of both your armies; whose equality  
 By our best eyes cannot be censured:  
 Blood hath bought blood and blows have answered blows;

315-316 *so silver-bright . . . gilt with Frenchmen's blood*] Cf. *Macb.*, II, iii, 111: "His *silver* skin laced with his *golden* blood." "Gilt" and "golden" are frequently found in the senses of "reddened" and "red."

322 *with purpled hands*] Hunters (of deer) in Elizabethan England dipped their hands in the blood of their quarry when it was killed. Cf. *Jul. Caes.*, III, i, 206-207, "and here thy hunters stand, Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe."

325 FIRST CIT.] In the First Folio, this and subsequent speeches belonging to this character (save that beginning at line 368, which is differently distinguished) are assigned to HUB., *i. e.*, Hubert. The blunder may be due to the fact that the same actor doubled the parts of "Hubert" and "First Citizen."

326 *retire*] retreat; see line 253, *supra*.

327-328 *whose equality . . . censured*] whose evenness of power will not permit the best eyes to estimate which is superior.

Strength match'd with strength, and power confronted  
power: 330.

Both are alike; and both alike we like.  
One must prove greatest: while they weigh so even,  
We hold our town for neither, yet for both.

*Re-enter the two KINGS, with their powers, severally*

K. JOHN. France, hast thou yet more blood to cast  
away?

Say, shall the current of our right run on?  
Whose passage, vex'd with thy impediment,  
Shall leave his native channel, and o'erswell  
With course disturb'd even thy confining shores,  
Unless thou let his silver water keep  
A peaceful progress to the ocean. 340

K. PHI. England, thou hast not saved one drop of  
blood,  
In this hot trial, more than we of France;  
Rather, lost more. And by this hand I swear,  
That sways the earth this climate overlooks,  
Before we will lay down our just-borne arms,  
We'll put thee down, 'gainst whom these arms we bear,  
Or add a royal number to the dead,  
Gracing the scroll that tells of this war's loss  
With slaughter coupled to the name of kings.

---

335 *run*] Thus the second and later Folios. The First Folio reads  
*rome* (*i. e.*, *roam*).

344 *this climate overlooks*] which the region of the heavens immediately  
above us overlooks.

347 *add a royal number to the dead*] add a king to the number of the  
dead.

BAST. Ha, majesty! how high thy glory towers, 350  
 When the rich blood of kings is set on fire!  
 O, now doth Death line his dead chaps with steel;  
 The swords of soldiers are his teeth, his fangs;  
 And now he feasts, mousing the flesh of men,  
 In undetermined differences of kings.  
 Why stand these royal fronts amazed thus?  
 Cry "havoc!" kings; back to the stained field,  
 You equal potents, fiery kindled spirits!  
 Then let confusion of one part confirm 359

The other's peace; till then, blows, blood, and death!

K. JOHN. Whose party do the townsmen yet admit?

K. PHI. Speak, citizens, for England; who's your king?

FIRST CIT. The king of England, when we know the king.

K. PHI. Know him in us, that here hold up his right.

K. JOHN. In us, that are our own great deputy,  
 And bear possession of our person here,  
 Lord of our presence, Angiers, and of you.

FIRST CIT. A greater power than we denies all this;

354 *mouseing*] devouring (as the cat eats the mouse).

356 *fronts*] brows.

357 *Cry "havoc"*] The cry which gave the signal for "no quarter." Cf. *Jul. Caes.*, III, i, 274: "*Cry 'Havoc'* and let slip the dogs of war."

358 *equal potents*] evenly matched potentates, powers.

359 *confusion of one part*] ruin of one side.

367 *Lord of our presence*] Lord of our person. Cf. I, i, 137, *supra*: "Lord of thy presence."

368 FIRST CIT.] The Folios assign this speech to FRANCE. Capell made the change adopted here.

*A greater power*] Providence.

And till it be undoubted, we do lock  
 Our former scruple in our strong-barr'd gates; 370  
 King'd of our fears, until our fears, resolved,  
 Be by some certain king purged and deposed.

BAST. By heaven, these scroyles of Angiers flout you,  
 kings,

And stand securely on their battlements,  
 As in a theatre, whence they gape and point  
 At your industrious scenes and acts of death.  
 Your royal presences be ruled by me:  
 Do like the mutines of Jerusalem,  
 Be friends awhile and both conjointly bend 380  
 Your sharpest deeds of malice on this town:  
 By east and west let France and England mount  
 Their battering cannon charged to the mouths,  
 Till their soul-fearing clamours have brawl'd down  
 The flinty ribs of this contemptuous city:  
 I'd play incessantly upon these jades,  
 Even till unfenced desolation  
 Leave them as naked as the vulgar air.  
 That done, dissever your united strengths,

371 *King'd of our fears*] Ruled by our fears. The Folios read, *Kings of our fears*, which Tyrwhitt ingeniously changed into the form now generally accepted. For the use of "king'd" cf. *Hen. V.* II, iv, 26. "She [*i. e.*, England] is so idly *king'd*."

373 *scroyles*] scrofulous fellows; from the French "*escrouelles*" (*i. e.*, vermin).

378 *the mutines of Jerusalem*] The mutincers of Jerusalem. A reference to two Jewish chiefs — at the head of two warring factions — who sank their differences to unite their forces against Titus when he besieged Jerusalem. The incident is related by Josephus.

383 *soul-fearing*] soul-appalling.

385 *jades*] vicious creatures; applied to vicious horses and mares alike.

And part your mingled colours once again;  
Turn face to face and bloody point to point; 390  
Then, in a moment, Fortune shall cull forth  
Out of one side her happy minion,  
To whom in favour she shall give the day,  
And kiss him with a glorious victory.  
How like you this wild counsel, mighty states?  
Smacks it not something of the policy?

K. JOHN. Now, by the sky that hangs above our heads,  
I like it well. France, shall we knit our powers  
And lay this Angiers even with the ground;  
Then after fight who shall be king of it? 400

BAST. An if thou hast the mettle of a king,  
Being wrong'd as we are by this peevish town,  
Turn thou the mouth of thy artillery,  
As we will ours, against these saucy walls;  
And when that we have dash'd them to the ground,  
Why then defy each other, and pell-mell  
Make work upon ourselves, for heaven or hell.

K. PHI. Let it be so. Say, where will you assault?

K. JOHN. We from the west will send destruction  
Into this city's bosom. 410

AUST. I from the north.

K. PHI. Our thunder from the south  
Shall rain their drift of bullets on this town.

BAST. O prudent discipline! From north to south:

392 *minion*] favourite.

395 *mighty states*] mighty rulers of states, princes.

402 *peevish*] wayward, petulant.

411-412 *Our thunder . . . drift*] Our thundering cannon shall hurl their driving shower.



Austria and France shoot in each other's mouth:  
I'll stir them to it. Come, away, away!

FIRST CIT. Hear us, great kings: vouchsafe awhile  
to stay,

And I shall show you peace and fair-faced league;  
Win you this city without stroke or wound;  
Rescue those breathing lives to die in beds,  
That here come sacrifices for the field:  
Persever not, but hear me, mighty kings.

420

K. JOHN. Speak on with favour; we are bent to hear.

FIRST CIT. That daughter there of Spain, the Lady  
Blanch,

Is niece to England: look upon the years  
Of Lewis the Dauphin and that lovely maid:  
If lusty love should go in quest of beauty,  
Where should he find it fairer than in Blanch?  
If zealous love should go in search of virtue,  
Where should he find it purer than in Blanch?

If love ambitious sought a match of birth,  
Whose veins bound richer blood than Lady Blanch?

430

Such as she is, in beauty, virtue, birth,  
Is the young Dauphin every way complete:  
If not complete of, say he is not she;

And she again wants nothing, to name want,

424 *niece*] Collier's sound emendation of the Folios' reading *neere* or *neer*. The Lady Blanch is rightly described as King John's niece, line 521, *infra*, although she is called his mother Elinor's niece, line 64, *supra* (see note), and line 469, *infra*.

434 *complete of*] full of (these virtues).

435-436 *to name want . . . she is not he*] to use so inappropriate a word as "want" in this connection, unless we treat it as a want that she is not he.

If want it be not that she is not he:  
 He is the half part of a blessed man,  
 Left to be finished by such as she;  
 And she a fair divided excellence,  
 Whose fulness of perfection lies in him. 440  
 O, two such silver currents, when they join,  
 Do glorify the banks that bound them in;  
 And two such shores to two such streams made one,  
 Two such controlling bounds shall you be, kings,  
 To these two princes, if you marry them.  
 This union shall do more than battery can  
 To our fast-closed gates; for at this match,  
 With swifter spleen than powder can enforce,  
 The mouth of passage shall we fling wide ope,  
 And give you entrance: but without this match, 450  
 The sea enraged is not half so deaf,  
 Lions more confident, mountains and rocks  
 More free from motion, no, not Death himself  
 In mortal fury half so peremptory,  
 As we to keep this city.

BAST. Here's a stay  
 That shakes the rotten carcass of old Death  
 Out of his rags! Here's a large mouth, indeed,  
 That spits forth death and mountains, rocks and seas,  
 Talks as familiarly of roaring lions  
 As maids of thirteen do of puppy-dogs! 460

448 *spleen*] eagerness, impetuous haste.

452-453 *Lions more confident* . . . *More free*] The negative of line 451 is implied in both clauses, *i. e.*, Lions are *not* more confident, etc.

455 *a stay*] a barrier, an obstacle, a check. Cf. Churchyard, *Siege of Leethe*, 1575: "This *staye* of warre made many men to muse."

What cannoneer begot this lusty blood?  
 He speaks plain cannon fire, and smoke and bounce;  
 He gives the bastinado with his tongue:  
 Our ears are cudgell'd; not a word of his  
 But buffets better than a fist of France:  
 Zounds! I was never so bethump'd with words  
 Since I first call'd my brother's father dad.

ELI. Son, list to this conjunction, make this match;  
 Give with our niece a dowry large enough:  
 For by this knot thou shalt so surely tie 470  
 Thy now unsured assurance to the crown,  
 That yon green boy shall have no sun to ripe  
 The bloom that promiseth a mighty fruit.  
 I see a yielding in the looks of France;  
 Mark, how they whisper: urge them while their souls  
 Are capable of this ambition,  
 Lest zeal, now melted by the windy breath  
 Of soft petitions, pity and remorse,  
 Cool and congeal again to what it was.

461 *blood*] gallant, cf. line 278, *supra*: "well-born bloods."

462 *He speaks plain cannon fire*] Cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 386: "I will speak daggers." For the construction, cf. *As you like it*, III, ii, 199, and note.  
*bounce*] report or bang of a gun.

463 *the bastinado*] a sound thrashing.

468 *conjunction*] matrimonial union.

471 *unsured*] uncertain.

477-479 *zeal . . . Cool and congeal again*] The present zeal (in the previously hard heart of King Philip) is compared to melted ice, and the fear is expressed that it may freeze to ice again. Cf. III, iv, 149-150, *infra*: "This act . . . shall cool the hearts Of all the people and freeze up their zeal."

478 *remorse*] compassion. Cf. IV, iii, 50 and 110, *infra*.

FIRST CIT. Why answer not the double majesties 480  
This friendly treaty of our threaten'd town?

K. PHI. Speak England first, that hath been forward  
first

To speak unto this city: what say you?

K. JOHN. If that the Dauphin there, thy princely  
son,

Can in this book of beauty read "I love,"  
Her dowry shall weigh equal with a queen:  
For Anjou, and fair Touraine, Maine, Poictiers,  
And all that we upon this side the sea,  
Except this city now by us besieged,  
Find liable to our crown and dignity, 490  
Shall gild her bridal bed, and make her rich  
In titles, honours and promotions,  
As she in beauty, education, blood,  
Holds hand with any princess of the world.

K. PHI. What say'st thou, boy? look in the lady's  
face.

LEW. I do, my lord; and in her eye I find  
A wonder, or a wondrous miracle,  
The shadow of myself form'd in her eye;  
Which, being but the shadow of your son,  
Becomes a sun and makes your son a shadow: 500  
I do protest I never loved myself  
Till now infixed I beheld myself  
Drawn in the flattering table of her eye.

[*Whispers with Blanch.*

---

487 *Anjou*] The Folios wrongly read *Angiers*. Cf. line 152, *supra*.

503 *table*] canvas or board (on which a picture is painted).

BAST. Drawn in the flattering table of her eye!

Hang'd in the frowning wrinkle of her brow!  
And quarter'd in her heart! he doth espy

Himself love's traitor: this is pity now,  
That, hang'd and drawn and quarter'd there should be,  
In such a love so vile a lout as he.

BLANCH. My uncle's will in this respect is mine: 510  
If he see aught in you that makes him like,  
That any thing he sees, which moves his liking,  
I can with ease translate it to my will;  
Or if you will, to speak more properly,  
I will enforce it easily to my love.  
Further I will not flatter you, my lord,  
That all I see in you is worthy love,  
Than this; that nothing do I see in you,  
Though churlish thoughts themselves should be your  
judge,

That I can find should merit any hate. 520

K. JOHN. What say these young ones? What say  
you, my niece?

BLANCH. That she is bound in honour still to do  
What you in wisdom still vouchsafe to say.

K. JOHN. Speak then, prince Dauphin; can you love  
this lady?

LEW. Nay, ask me if I can refrain from love;  
For I do love her most unfeignedly.

504-509 *Drawn . . . as he*] This speech is in the six-line stanza of *Venus and Adonis*. Cf. *L. L. L.*, I, i, 147-158, and *Rom. and Jul.*, I, ii, 45-50.

504-506 *Drawn . . . Hang'd . . . quarter'd*] A reference to the three stages of punishment inflicted on traitors who were first drawn to the gallows on a hurdle, then hanged, then hewn into quarters.

K. JOHN. Then do I give Volquessen, Touraine,  
Maine,  
Poitiers, and Anjou, these five provinces,  
With her to thee; and this addition more,  
Full thirty thousand marks of English coin. 530  
Philip of France, if thou be pleased withal,  
Command thy son and daughter to join hands.

K. PHI. It likes us well; young princes, close your  
hands.

AUST. And your lips too; for I am well assured  
That I did so when I was first assured.

K. PHI. Now, citizens of Angiers, ope your gates,  
Let in that amity which you have made;  
For at Saint Mary's chapel presently  
The rites of marriage shall be solemnized.  
Is not the Lady Constance in this troop? 540  
I know she is not, for this match made up  
Her presence would have interrupted much:  
Where is she and her son? tell me, who knows.

LEW. She is sad and passionate at your highness' tent.

K. PHI. And, by my faith, this league that we have  
made  
Will give her sadness very little cure.  
Brother of England, how may we content  
This widow lady? In her right we came;  
Which we, God knows, have turn'd another way,  
To our own vantage.

---

527 *Volquessen*] The ancient name (*Pagus Velocessinus*) of the Vexin,  
the district round Rouen.

535 *first assured*] first affianced, betrothed.

544 *passionate*] agitated (by passion).

# KING JOHN

## ACT II

K. JOHN.                    We will heal up all; 550  
 For we'll create young Arthur Duke of Bretagne  
 And Earl of Richmond; and this rich fair town  
 We make him lord of. Call the Lady Constance;  
 Some speedy messenger bid her repair  
 To our solemnity: I trust we shall,  
 If not fill up the measure of her will,  
 Yet in some measure satisfy her so  
 That we shall stop her exclamation.  
 Go we, as well as haste will suffer us,  
 To this unlook'd for, unprepared pomp. 560

*[Exeunt all but the Bastard.]*

BAST. Mad world! mad kings! mad composition!  
 John, to stop Arthur's title in the whole,  
 Hath willingly departed with a part:  
 And France, whose armour conscience buckled on,  
 Whom zeal and charity brought to the field  
 As God's own soldier, rounded in the ear  
 With that same purpose-changer, that sly devil,  
 That broker, that still breaks the pate of faith,  
 That daily break-vow, he that wins of all,  
 Of kings, of beggars, old men, young men, maids, 570  
 Who, having no external thing to lose  
 But the word "maid," cheats the poor maid of that,

561 *composition*] compact, treaty.

563 *departed*] parted.

566 *rounded*] whispered. Cf. *Wint. Tale*, I, ii, 217: "whispering, rounding."

571-572 *having* . . . "maid"] this is an absolute clause, with an implied subject "they" (*i. e.*, "maids") which governs "having."

That smooth-faced gentleman, tickling Commodity,  
 Commodity, the bias of the world,  
 The world, who of itself is peised well.  
 Made to run even upon even ground,  
 Till this advantage, this vile-drawing bias,  
 This sway of motion, this Commodity,  
 Makes it take head from all indifferency,  
 From all direction, purpose, course, intent: 580  
 And this same bias, this Commodity,  
 This bawd, this broker, this all-changing word,  
 Clapp'd on the outward eye of fickle France,  
 Hath drawn him from his own determined aid,  
 From a resolved and honourable war,  
 To a most base and vile-concluded peace.  
 And why rail I on this Commodity?  
 But for because he hath not woo'd me yet:  
 Not that I have the power to clutch my hand,  
 When his fair angels would salute my palm; 590

573 *tickling . . . Commodity*] flattering, cajoling, . . . Self-interest or Expediency.

574 *the bias*] Literally the piece of lead fixed to a bowl to make it swerve when played in the game. "Commodity" is here defined as an influence making the world swerve from its right course.

575 *who . . . is peised*] which is poised or balanced.

579 *Makes it take . . . indifferency*] Makes it deviate altogether from the direction of impartiality or judicial equity.

582 *broker*] go-between, pimp.

584 *his own determined aid*] the aid he had determined to give.

589 *clutch*] clench, shut.

590 *angels*] gold coins, worth about ten shillings apiece. Cf. III, iii, 8, *infra*.

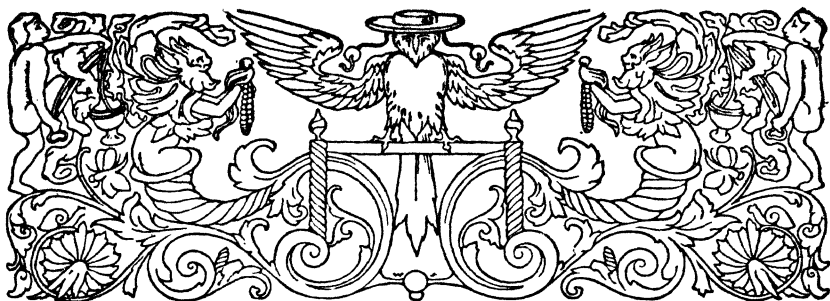


## KING JOHN

## ACT II

But for my hand, as unattempted yet,  
Like a poor beggar, raileth on the rich,  
Well, whiles I am a beggar, I will rail  
And say there is no sin but to be rich;  
And being rich, my virtue then shall be  
To say there is no vice but beggary.  
Since kings break faith upon commodity,  
Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee.

*[Exit.]*

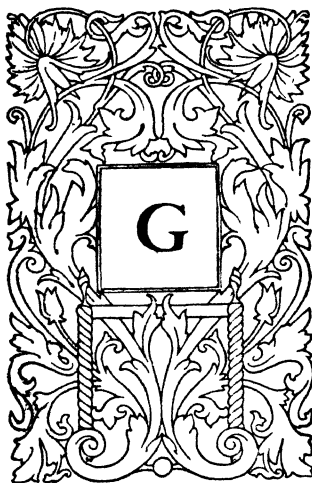


## ACT THIRD — SCENE I

### THE FRENCH KING'S PAVILION

*Enter* CONSTANCE, ARTHUR, and SALISBURY

CONSTANCE



ONE TO BE MARRIED!

gone to swear a peace!

False blood to false blood join'd!

gone to be friends!

Shall Lewis have Blanch, and

Blanch those provinces?

It is not so; thou hast misspoke,  
misheard;

Be well advised, tell o'er thy tale  
again:

It cannot be; thou dost but say  
't is so:

I trust I may not trust thee; for  
thy word

Is but the vain breath of a common man:

Believe me, I do not believe thee, man;

1 *Gone to be married*] Theobald first made Act III begin here. The Folios defer the opening till line 75, connecting the preceding lines with Act II.

I have a king's oath to the contrary. 10  
Thou shalt be punish'd for thus frightening me,  
For I am sick and capable of fears,  
Oppress'd with wrongs and therefore full of fears,  
A widow, husbandless, subject to fears,  
A woman, naturally born to fears;  
And though thou now confess thou didst but jest,  
With my vex'd spirits I cannot take a truce,  
But they will quake and tremble all this day.  
What dost thou mean by shaking of thy head?  
Why dost thou look so sadly on my son? 20  
What means that hand upon that breast of thine?  
Why holds thine eye that lamentable rheum,  
Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds?  
Be these sad signs confirmers of thy words?  
Then speak again; not all thy former tale,  
But this one word, whether thy tale be true.

SAL. As true as I believe you think them false  
That give you cause to prove my saying true.

CONST. O, if thou teach me to believe this sorrow, 30  
Teach thou this sorrow how to make me die,  
And let belief and life encounter so  
As doth the fury of two desperate men

---

14 *A widow*] As a matter of history, Constance was at this period wife of a third husband, Guy, Count of Thouars. After the death of Prince Arthur's father, Geoffrey (her first husband), she married, secondly, Randolph de Blundeville, Earl of Chester, whom she divorced.

22 *lamentable rheum*] tears of sorrow or lamentation.

24 *these sad signs*] the shaking of the head, the laying of the hand on the breast, the tearful eye, to which the speaker has just drawn attention.

Which in the very meeting fall and die.

Lewis marry Blanch! O boy, then where art thou?

France friend with England, what becomes of me?

Fellow, be gone: I cannot brook thy sight:

This news hath made thee a most ugly man.

SAL. What other harm have I, good lady, done,

But spoke the harm that is by others done?

CONST. Which harm within itself so heinous is 40  
As it makes harmful all that speak of it.

ARTH. I do beseech you, madam, be content.

CONST. If thou, that bid'st me be content, wert grim,  
Ugly and slanderous to thy mother's womb,  
Full of unpleasing blots and sightless stains,  
Lame, foolish, crooked, swart, prodigious,  
Patch'd with foul moles and eye-offending marks,  
I would not care, I then would be content,  
For then I should not love thee, no, nor thou  
Become thy great birth nor deserve a crown. 50  
But thou art fair, and at thy birth, dear boy,  
Nature and Fortune join'd to make thee great:  
Of Nature's gifts thou mayst with lilies boast  
And with the half-blown rose. But Fortune, O,  
She is corrupted, changed and won from thee;  
She adulterates hourly with thine uncle John,  
And with her golden hand hath pluck'd on France  
To tread down fair respect of sovereignty,

45 *blots . . . stains*] Cf. II, i, 114, *supra*: "the blots and stains of right."

"Sightless" means "unsightly."

46 *swart, prodigious*] ill-favouredly dark, monstrously misshapen. Cf. line

91, *infra*, where "prodigiously" suggests "by misshapen abortions."

56 *adulterates*] commits adultery.

And made his majesty the bawd to theirs.  
 France is a bawd to Fortune and King John, 60  
 That strumpet Fortune, that usurping John!  
 Tell me, thou fellow, is not France forsworn?  
 Envenom him with words, or get thee gone,  
 And leave those woes alone which I alone  
 Am bound to under-bear.

SAL. Pardon me, madam,  
 I may not go without you to the kings.

CONST. Thou mayst, thou shalt; I will not go with  
 thee:

I will instruct my sorrows to be proud;  
 For grief is proud and makes his owner stoop.  
 To me and to the state of my great grief 70  
 Let kings assemble; for my grief's so great  
 That no supporter but the huge firm earth  
 Can hold it up: here I and sorrows sit;  
 Here is my throne, bid kings come bow to it.

*[Seats herself on the ground.]*

*Enter* KING JOHN, KING PHILIP, LEWIS, BLANCH, ELINOR,  
 the BASTARD, AUSTRIA, and Attendants

K. PHI. 'T is true, fair daughter; and this blessed day  
 Ever in France shall be kept festival:

63 *Envenom*] Poison.

69 *stoop*] Thus the Folios. Hanmer wrongly substituted *stout*. Con-  
 stance is too agitated to make her imagery quite consistent. She  
 means that she is prostrated to the ground by the weight of her  
 grief: she will not obey the summons of the kings; they must come  
 to her and bow down before her who lies prone on the earth.

75 *'T is true*] Here the Folios begin Act III. See line 1, *supra*, and note.

To solemnize this day the glorious sun  
 Stays in his course and plays the alchemist,  
 Turning with spendour of his precious eye  
 The meagre cloddy earth to glittering gold: 80  
 The yearly course that brings this day about  
 Shall never see it but a holiday.

CONST. A wicked day, and not a holy day! [*Rising.*  
 What hath this day deserved? what hath it done,  
 That it in golden letters should be set  
 Among the high tides in the calendar?  
 Nay, rather turn this day out of the week,  
 This day of shame, oppression, perjury.  
 Or, if it must stand still, let wives with child,  
 Pray that their burthens may not fall this day, 90  
 Lest that their hopes prodigiously be cross'd:  
 But on this day let seamen fear no wreck;  
 No bargains break that are not this day made:  
 This day, all things begun come to ill end,  
 Yea, faith itself to hollow falsehood change!

K. PHI. By heaven, lady, you shall have no cause  
 To curse the fair proceedings of this day:  
 Have I not pawn'd to you my majesty?

CONST. You have beguiled me with a counterfeit

77-78 *the glorious sun . . . alchemist*] Cf. *Sonnet xxxiii*, 1-4: "a glorious morning . . . Gilding pale streams with heavenly *alchemy*."

86 *high tides*] days of high festivals, solemn seasons.

91 *prodigiously be cross'd*] be frustrated by misshapen abortions: cf. line 46, "prodigious," *i. e.*, monstrously misshapen.

92 *But on this day*] Except on this day, on this day only.

99 *counterfeit*] base coin.

Resembling majesty, which, being touch'd and tried, 100  
 Proves valueless: you are forsworn, forsworn;  
 You came in arms to spill mine enemies' blood,  
 But now in arms you strengthen it with yours:  
 The grappling vigour and rough frown of war  
 Is cold in amity and painted peace,  
 And our oppression hath made up this league.  
 Arm, arm, you heavens, against these perjured kings!  
 A widow cries; be husband to me, heavens!  
 Let not the hours of this ungodly day  
 Wear out the day in peace; but, ere sunset, 110  
 Set armed discord 'twixt these perjured kings!  
 Hear me, O, hear me!

AUST. Lady Constance, peace!

CONST. War! war! no peace! peace is to me a war.  
 O Lymoges! O Austria! thou dost shame  
 That bloody spoil: thou slave, thou wretch, thou coward!  
 Thou little valiant, great in villany!  
 Thou ever strong upon the stronger side!  
 Thou Fortune's champion, that dost never fight  
 But when her humorous ladyship is by  
 To teach thee safety! thou art perjured too, 120  
 And soothest up greatness. What a fool art thou,

---

100 *touch'd and tried*] tested by the touchstone.

103 *now in arms . . . with yours*] now in embraces you support my enemies with your blood. There is an obvious quibble on the word "arms."

105 *painted peace*] pretence of peace.

114 *O Lymoges! O Austria!*] Titles of two quite different persons, who are confused together in the old play. See II, i, 5, *supra*, and note.

121 *soothest up*] flatterest up.

A ramping fool, to brag and stamp and swear  
 Upon my party! Thou cold-blooded slave,  
 Hast thou not spoke like thunder on my side,  
 Been sworn my soldier, bidding me depend  
 Upon thy stars, thy fortune and thy strength,  
 And dost thou now fall over to my foes?  
 Thou wear a lion's hide! doff it for shame,  
 And hang a calf's-skin on those recreant limbs. 129

AUST. O, that a man should speak those words to me!

BAST. And hang a calf's-skin on those recreant limbs.

AUST. Thou dardest not say so, villain, for thy life.

BAST. And hang a calf's-skin on those recreant limbs.

K. JOHN. We like not this; thou dost forget thyself.

*Enter PANDULPH*

K. PHI. Here comes the holy legate of the pope.

PAND. Hail, you anointed deputies of heaven!

To thee, King John, my holy errand is.

I Pandulph, of fair Milan cardinal,

And from Pope Innocent the legate here,

Do in his name religiously demand 140

Why thou against the church, our holy mother,

So wilfully dost spurn; and force perforce

Keep Stephen Langton, chosen archbishop

Of Canterbury, from that holy see:

122 *ramping*] gesticulating with violence; used of rearing horses.

123 *Upon my party*] Against my side.

127 *fall over*] go over, revolt. Cf. line 320, *infra*: "will fall from thee."

129 *a calf's-skin*] a fool's coat.

142 *force perforce*] willy-nilly, in despite of everything.



This, in our foresaid holy father's name,  
Pope Innocent, I do demand of thee.

K. JOHN. What earthy name to interrogatories  
Can task the free breath of a sacred king?  
Thou canst not, cardinal, devise a name  
So slight, unworthy and ridiculous, 150  
To charge me to an answer, as the pope.  
Tell him this tale; and from the mouth of England  
Add thus much more, that no Italian priest  
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions;  
But as we, under heaven, are supreme head,  
So under Him that great supremacy,  
Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,  
Without the assistance of a mortal hand.  
So tell the pope, all reverence set apart  
To him and his usurp'd authority. 160

K. PHI. Brother of England, you blaspheme in  
this.

K. JOHN. Though you and all the kings of Christen-  
dom

Are led so grossly by this meddling priest.  
Dreading the curse that money may buy out;  
And by the merit of vile gold, dross, dust,  
Purchase corrupted pardon of a man,

---

147-148 *What earthy name . . . sacred king*] What earthly name or power can coerce or compel the free speech of a sacred king to reply to interrogatories (*i. e.*, formal questions in legal procedure which have to be answered on oath). Theobald substituted *task* for the Folio reading *taste*.

154 *Shall tithe or toll*] Shall take tithe or levy tax.

159-160 *all reverence . . . To him*] all respect for him being revoked.

Who in that sale sells pardon from himself,  
Though you and all the rest so grossly led  
This juggling witchcraft with revenue cherish,  
Yet I alone, alone do me oppose 170  
Against the pope and count his friends my foes.

PAND. Then, by the lawful power that I have,  
Thou shalt stand cursed and excommunicate:  
And blessed shall he be that doth revolt  
From his allegiance to an heretic;  
And meritorious shall that hand be call'd,  
Canonized and worshipp'd as a saint,  
That takes away by any secret course  
Thy hateful life.

CONST. O, lawful let it be  
That I have room with Rome to curse awhile! 180  
Good father cardinal, cry thou amen  
To my keen curses; for without my wrong  
There is no tongue hath power to curse him right.

PAND. There's law and warrant, lady, for my curse.

CONST. And for mine too: when law can do no  
right,  
Let it be lawful that law bar no wrong:  
Law cannot give my child his kingdom here,  
For he that holds his kingdom holds the law;  
Therefore, since law itself is perfect wrong,  
How can the law forbid my tongue to curse? 190

PAND. Philip of France, on peril of a curse,  
Let go the hand of that arch-heretic;

180 *room . . . Rome*] the two words were pronounced the same by Elizabethans. Cf. *Jul. Caes.*, I, ii, 156.

And raise the power of France upon his head,  
Unless he do submit himself to Rome.

ELI. Look'st thou pale, France? do not let go thy  
hand.

CONST. Look to that, devil; lest that France repent,  
And by disjoining hands, hell lose a soul.

AUST. King Philip, listen to the cardinal.

BAST. And hang a calf's-skin on his recreant limbs.

AUST. Well, ruffian, I must pocket up these wrongs,  
Because —

BAST. Your breeches best may carry them. 201

K. JOHN. Philip, what say'st thou to the cardinal?

CONST. What should he say, but as the cardinal?

LEW. Bethink you, father; for the difference  
Is purchase of a heavy curse from Rome,  
Or the light loss of England for a friend:  
Forgo the easier.

BLANCH. That's the curse of Rome.

CONST. O Lewis, stand fast! the devil tempts thee  
here  
In likeness of a new untrimmed bride.

BLANCH. The Lady Constance speaks not from her  
faith, 210

But from her need.

CONST. O, if thou grant my need,  
Which only lives but by the death of faith,  
That need must needs infer this principle,

209 *untrimmed bride*] bride undrest for the nuptial couch. "Un-  
trimmed" is also found in the sense of "with hair hanging loose."

213 *infer*] prove.

That faith would live again by death of need.  
O then, tread down my need, and faith mounts up;  
Keep my need up, and faith is trodden down!

K. JOHN. The king is moved, and answers not to this.

CONST. O, be removed from him, and answer well!

AUST. Do so, King Philip; hang no more in doubt.

BAST. Hang nothing but a calf's-skin, most sweet  
lout. 220

K. PHI. I am perplex'd, and know not what to say.

PAND. What canst thou say but will perplex thee  
more,

If thou stand excommunicate and cursed?

K. PHI. Good reverend father, make my person  
yours,

And tell me how you would bestow yourself.

This royal hand and mine are newly knit,

And the conjunction of our inward souls

Married in league, coupled and link'd together

With all religious strength of sacred vows;

The latest breath that gave the sound of words 230

Was deep-sworn faith, peace, amity, true love

Between our kingdoms and our royal selves,

And even before this truce, but new before,

No longer than we well could wash our hands

To clap this royal bargain up of peace,

Heaven knows, they were besmear'd and overstain'd

225 *bestow yourself*] proceed to act.

235 *clap . . . up*] clinch by striking or shaking hands.

With slaughter's pencil, where revenge did paint  
 The fearful difference of incensed kings:  
 And shall these hands, so lately purged of blood,  
 So newly join'd in love, so strong in both, 240  
 Unyoke this seizure and this kind regret?  
 Play fast and loose with faith? so jest with heaven,  
 Make such unconstant children of ourselves,  
 As now again to snatch our palm from palm,  
 Unswear faith sworn, and on the marriage-bed  
 Of smiling peace to march a bloody host,  
 And make a riot on the gentle brow  
 Of true sincerity? O, holy sir,  
 My reverend father, let it not be so!  
 Out of your grace, devise, ordain, impose 250  
 Some gentle order; and then we shall be blest  
 To do your pleasure and continue friends.

PAND. All form is formless, order orderless,  
 Save what is opposite to England's love.  
 Therefore to arms! be champion of our church,  
 Or let the church, our mother, breathe her curse,  
 A mother's curse, on her revolting son.  
 France, thou mayst hold a serpent by the tongue,  
 A chafed lion by the mortal paw,

240 *so strong in both*] *sc.* deeds of blood and deeds of love.

241 *regret*] salutation.

242 *fast and loose*] the name of a popular cheating game. See *L. L. L.*,  
I, ii, 149, and note.

254 *opposite*] hostile, adverse.

259 *chafed*] Theobald's emendation of the Folio reading *cased* (*i. e.*, con-  
fined or chained), which may be right.

*mortal*] deadly, fatal.

A fasting tiger safer by the tooth,  
Than keep in peace that hand which thou dost hold. 260

K. PHI. I may disjoin my hand, but not my faith.

PAND. So makest thou faith an enemy to faith;  
And like a civil war set'st oath to oath,  
Thy tongue against thy tongue. O, let thy vow  
First made to heaven, first be to heaven perform'd,  
That is, to be the champion of our church.

What since thou sworest is sworn against thyself  
And may not be performed by thyself,

For that which thou hast sworn to do amiss 270  
Is not amiss when it is truly done,  
And being not done, where doing tends to ill,  
The truth is then most done not doing it:

The better act of purposes mistook  
Is to mistake again; though indirect,  
Yet indirection thereby grows direct,  
And falsehood falsehood cures, as fire cools fire  
Within the scorched veins of one new-burn'd.

It is religion that doth make vows kept;  
But thou hast sworn against religion, 280  
By what thou swear'st against the thing thou swear'st,

270-273 *For that which . . . doing it*] The meaning of this negative mode of reasoning is that wrong, which you have sworn to do, is not wrong when the dictates of truth or rectitude are followed (and the act is not done); (the calls of) rectitude are best satisfied, when action which tends to evil is left undone.

275 *indirect*] wrong.

280-284 *Thou hast sworn . . . not to be forsworn*] Thou hast sworn against the dictates of religion by the oath (of alliance with England) which thou art taking against thy sworn obligation (to be

And makest an oath the surety for thy truth  
 Against an oath: the truth thou art unsure  
 To swear, swears only not to be forsworn;  
 Else what a mockery should it be to swear!  
 But thou dost swear only to be forsworn;  
 And most forsworn, to keep what thou dost swear.  
 Therefore thy later vows against thy first  
 Is in thyself rebellion to thyself;  
 And better conquest never canst thou make  
 Than arm thy constant and thy nobler parts  
 Against these giddy loose suggestions:  
 Upon which better part our prayers come in,  
 If thou vouchsafe them. But if not, then know  
 The peril of our curses light on thee  
 So heavy as thou shalt not shake them off,  
 But in despair die under their black weight.

290

AUST. Rebellion, flat rebellion!

BAST.

Will 't not be?

Will not a calf's-skin stop that mouth of thine?

LEW. Father, to arms!

BLANCH.

Upon thy wedding-day?

300

Against the blood that thou hast married?

What, shall our feast be kept with slaughtered men?

Shall braying trumpets and loud churlish drums,

---

champion of the church), and thou art making an oath (this oath to King John) a certainty or guarantee of perjury (*i. e.*, of thy truth against, of thy defiance of, an oath to the church): the oath of fidelity to the church (which thou hesitatest to make) is an oath that does not admit of perjury. The text follows the reading of the First Folios, but some changes have been introduced into the punctuation.

292 *suggestions*] temptations.

Clamours of hell, be measures to our pomp?  
 O husband, hear me! ay, alack, how new  
 Is husband in my mouth! even for that name,  
 Which till this time my tongue did ne'er pronounce,  
 Upon my knee I beg, go not to arms  
 Against mine uncle.

CONST. O, upon my knee,  
 Made hard with kneeling, I do pray to thee, 310  
 Thou virtuous Dauphin, alter not the doom  
 Forethought by heaven!

BLANCH. Now shall I see thy love: what motive may  
 Be stronger with thee than the name of wife?

CONST. That which upholdeth him that thee upholds,  
 His honour: O, thine honour, Lewis, thine honour!

LEW. I muse your majesty doth seem so cold,  
 When such profound respects do pull you on.

PAND. I will denounce a curse upon his head.

K. PHI. Thou shalt not need. England, I will fall  
 from thee. 320

CONST. O fair return of banish'd majesty!

ELI. O foul revolt of French inconstancy!

K. JOHN. France, thou shalt rue this hour within  
 this hour.

BAST. Old Time the clock-setter, that bald sexton  
 Time,

Is it as he will? well then, France shall rue.

304 *measures*] slow musical accompaniments, slow dance-tunes.

317 *muse*] wonder.

318 *profound respects*] important considerations.

320 *fall from thee*] revolt from thee. Cf. line 127, *supra*: "*fall* over to my foes."



BLANCH. The sun's o'ercast with blood: fair day,  
adieu!

Which is the side that I must go withal?  
I am with both: each army hath a hand;  
And in their rage, I having hold of both,  
They whirl asunder and dismember me. 330  
Husband, I cannot pray that thou mayst win;  
Uncle, I needs must pray that thou mayst lose;  
Father, I may not wish the fortune thine;  
Grandam, I will not wish thy wishes thrive:  
Whoever wins, on that side shall I lose;  
Assured loss before the match be play'd.

LEW. Lady, with me, with me thy fortune lies.

BLANCH. There where my fortune lives, there my life  
dies.

K. JOHN. Cousin, go draw our puissance together.

*[Exit Bastard.]*

France, I am burn'd up with inflaming wrath; 340  
A rage whose heat hath this condition,  
That nothing can allay, nothing but blood,  
The blood, and dearest-valued blood, of France.

K. PHI. Thy rage shall burn thee up, and thou shalt  
turn

To ashes, ere our blood shall quench that fire:  
Look to thyself, thou art in jeopardy.

K. JOHN. No more than he that threats. To arms  
let's hie! *[Exeunt.]*

## SCENE III

## KING JOHN

## SCENE II — THE SAME

## PLAINS NEAR ANGIERS

*Alarums, excursions. Enter the BASTARD, with AUSTRIA's head*

BAST. Now, by my life, this day grows wondrous hot;  
Some airy devil hovers in the sky,  
And pours down mischief. Austria's head lie there,  
While Philip breathes.

*Enter KING JOHN. ARTHUR, and HUBERT*

K. JOHN. Hubert, keep this boy. Philip, make up:  
My mother is assailed in our tent,  
And ta'en, I fear.

BAST. My lord, I rescued her;  
Her highness is in safety, fear you not:  
But on, my liege; for very little pains  
Will bring this labour to an happy end. [*Exeunt.* 10

## SCENE III — THE SAME

*Alarums, excursions, retreat. Enter KING JOHN, ELINOR, ARTHUR,  
the BASTARD, HUBERT, and Lords*

K. JOHN. [*To Elinor*] So shall it be; your grace shall  
stay behind  
So strongly guarded. [*To Arthur*] Cousin, look not sad:

2 *airy*] aerial. In the original *dramatis personæ* of the *Tempest*, Ariel  
is described as "an ayrie spirit."

5 *Philip*] The Bastard's original name, which King John changed to  
Richard, at I, i, 162. Philip (line 4) is the king of France.

*make up*] hurry up, make haste.

Thy grandam loves thee; and thy uncle will  
As dear be to thee as thy father was.

ARTH. O, this will make my mother die with grief!

K. JOHN. [*To the Bastard*] Cousin, away for England!  
haste before:

And, ere our coming, see thou shake the bags  
Of hoarding abbots; imprisoned angels  
Set at liberty: the fat ribs of peace  
Must by the hungry now be fed upon: 10  
Use our commission in his utmost force.

BAST. Bell, book, and candle shall not drive me back,  
When gold and silver beck me to come on.  
I leave your highness. Grandam, I will pray,  
If ever I remember to be holy,  
For your fair safety; so, I kiss your hand.

ELI. Farewell, gentle cousin.

K. JOHN. Coz, farewell.

[*Exit Bastard.*]

ELI. Come hither, little kinsman; hark, a word.

K. JOHN. Come hither, Hubert. O my gentle  
Hubert,

We owe thee much! within this wall of flesh 20  
There is a soul counts thee her creditor,  
And with advantage means to pay thy love:  
And, my good friend, thy voluntary oath  
Lives in this bosom, dearly cherished.  
Give me thy hand. I had a thing to say,

8 *angels*] gold coins. Cf. II, i, 590, *supra*.

12 *Bell, book, and candle*] Implements of an ecclesiastical curse or ex-communication.

22 *advantage*] interest.

But I will fit it with some better time.

By heaven, Hubert, I am almost ashamed  
To say what good respect I have of thee.

HUB. I am much bounden to your majesty.

K. JOHN. Good friend, thou hast no cause to say so  
yet, 30

But thou shalt have; and creep time ne'er so slow,  
Yet it shall come for me to do thee good.

I had a thing to say, but let it go:

The sun is in the heaven, and the proud day,

Attended with the pleasures of the world,

Is all too wanton and too full of gawds

To give me audience: if the midnight bell

Did, with his iron tongue and brazen mouth,

Sound on into the drowsy ear of night;

If this same were a churchyard where we stand, 40

And thou possessed with a thousand wrongs;

Or if that surly spirit, melancholy,

Had baked thy blood and made it heavy-thick,

Which else runs tickling up and down the veins,

Making that idiot, laughter, keep men's eyes

And strain their cheeks to idle merriment,

A passion hateful to my purposes;

Or if that thou couldst see me without eyes,

Hear me without thine ears, and make reply

Without a tongue, using conceit alone, 50

26 *time*] Pope's emendation of the Folios reading *tune*.

36 *gawds*] showy, idle ornaments.

39 *ear*] An accepted emendation of the Folio reading *race* (*i. e.*, course).

50 *conceit*] thought.

Without eyes, ears and harmful sound of words;  
 Then, in despite of brooded watchful day,  
 I would into thy bosom pour my thoughts:  
 But, ah, I will not! yet I love thee well;  
 And, by my troth, I think thou lovest me well.

HUB. So well, that what you bid me undertake,  
 Though that my death were adjunct to my act,  
 By heaven, I would do it.

K. JOHN. Do not I know thou wouldst?  
 Good Hubert, Hubert, Hubert, throw thine eye  
 On yon young boy: I'll tell thee what, my friend, 60  
 He is a very serpent in my way;  
 And wheresoe'er this foot of mine doth tread,  
 He lies before me: dost thou understand me?  
 Thou art his keeper.

HUB. And I'll keep him so,  
 That he shall not offend your majesty.

K. JOHN. Death.

HUB. My lord?

K. JOHN. A grave.

HUB. He shall not live.

K. JOHN. Enough.

I could be merry now. Hubert, I love thee;  
 Well, I'll not say what I intend for thee:  
 Remember. Madam, fare you well:  
 I'll send those powers o'er to your majesty. 70

ELI. My blessing go with thee!

52 *brooded watchful day*] brooding vigilant day. The day is as vigilant,  
 as open-eyed, as an animal with a brood (to guard).

K. JOHN. For England, cousin, go;  
 Hubert shall be your man, attend on you  
 With all true duty. On toward Calais, ho! [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE IV — THE SAME

## THE FRENCH KING'S TENT

*Enter KING PHILIP, LEWIS, FANDULPH, and Attendants*

K. PHI. So, by a roaring tempest on the flood,  
 A whole armado of convicted sail  
 Is scattered and disjoin'd from fellowship.

PAND. Courage and comfort! all shall yet go well.

K. PHI. What can go well, when we have run so  
 ill?

Are we not beaten? Is not Angiers lost?  
 Arthur ta'en prisoner? divers dear friends slain?  
 And bloody England into England gone,  
 O'erbearing interruption, spite of France?

LEW. What he hath won, that hath he fortified: 10  
 So hot a speed with such advice disposed,  
 Such temperate order in so fierce a cause,

2 *armado of convicted sail*] armament or fleet of conquered or beaten sailing vessels.

6-7 *Angiers lost? Arthur ta'en prisoner?*] These events were not historically synchronous. Arthur's capture happened in 1202; the fall of Angiers four years later.

9 *O'erbearing interruption*] Putting down attempts to bar the way.

11 *with such advice disposed*] with such judgment regulated.

12 *cause*] action, course of action.

Doth want example: who hath read or heard  
Of any kindred action like to this?

K. PHIL. Well could I bear that England had this  
praise,  
So we could find some pattern of our shame.

*Enter* CONSTANCE

Look, who comes here! a grave unto a soul;  
Holding the eternal spirit, against her will,  
In the vile prison of afflicted breath.

I prithee, lady, go away with me.

20

CONST. Lo, now! now see the issue of your peace.

K. PHIL. Patience, good lady! comfort, gentle Con-  
stance!

CONST. No, I defy all counsel, all redress,  
But that which ends all counsel, true redress,  
Death, death; O amiable lovely death!  
Thou odoriferous stench! sound rottenness!  
Arise forth from the couch of lasting night,  
Thou hate and terror to prosperity,  
And I will kiss thy detestable bones  
And put my eyeballs in thy vaulty brows  
And ring these fingers with thy household worms  
And stop this gap of breath with fulsome dust  
And be a carrion monster like thyself:  
Come, grin on me, and I will think thou smilest,

30

16 *some pattern*] some justifying precedent.

19 *the vile prison of afflicted breath*] Cf. IV, ii, 246, where John speaks  
of his own corporeal frame as "this *confine* of blood and *breath*."

32 *gap of breath*] outlet of breath, mouth.

And buss thee as thy wife. Misery's love,  
O, come to me!

K. PHI. O fair affliction, peace!

CONST. No, no, I will not, having breath to cry:  
O, that my tongue were in the thunder's mouth!  
Then with a passion would I shake the world;  
And rouse from sleep that fell anatomy  
Which cannot hear a lady's feeble voice,  
Which scorns a modern invocation.

40

PAND. Lady, you utter madness, and not sorrow.

CONST. Thou art not holy to belie me so;  
I am not mad: this hair I tear is mine;  
My name is Constance; I was Geoffrey's wife;  
Young Arthur is my son, and he is lost:  
I am not mad: I would to heaven I were!  
For then, 't is like I should forget myself:  
O, if I could, what grief should I forget!  
Preach some philosophy to make me mad,  
And thou shalt be canonized, cardinal;  
For, being not mad but sensible of grief,  
My reasonable part produces reason  
How I may be deliver'd of these woes,  
And teaches me to kill or hang myself:  
If I were mad, I should forget my son,

50

35 *buss*] kiss.

*Misery's love*] Death is courted by misery. Cf. line 28, *supra*:  
"Thou *hate* and terror to prosperity."

42 *modern*] commonplace. Cf. *As you like it*, II, vii, 156: "*modern*  
instances."

44 *not holy*] The necessary negative article, which was omitted from  
the first three Folios, was added by the Fourth Folio.



Or madly think a babe of clouts were he:

I am not mad; too well, too well I feel

The different plague of each calamity.

60

K. PHI. Bind up those tresses. O, what love I note  
In the fair multitude of those her hairs!

Where but by chance a silver drop hath fallen,

Even to that drop ten thousand wiry friends

Do glue themselves in sociable grief,

Like true, inseparable, faithful loves,

Sticking together in calamity.

CONST. To England, if you will.

K. PHI.

Bind up your hairs.

CONST. Yes, that I will; and wherefore will I do it?

I tore them from their bonds and cried aloud,

70

“O that these hands could so redeem my son,

As they have given these hairs their liberty!”

But now I envy at their liberty,

And will again commit them to their bonds,

Because my poor child is a prisoner.

And, father cardinal, I have heard you say

That we shall see and know our friends in heaven:

If that be true, I shall see my boy again;

For since the birth of Cain, the first male child,

To him that did but yesterday suspire,

80

There was not such a gracious creature born.

58 *a babe of clouts*] a rag-doll.

64 *friends*] Rowe's emendation of the original reading *fiends*.

68 *To England, if you will*] Constance appears to be answering the appeal addressed to her by King Philip at line 20, *supra*: “I prithee, lady, go away with me.”

80 *suspire*] breathe. Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, IV, v, 33: “Did he *suspire* . . .”

But now will canker sorrow eat my bud  
 And chase the native beauty from his cheek  
 And he will look as hollow as a ghost,  
 As dim and meagre as an ague's fit,  
 And so he'll die; and, rising so again,  
 When I shall meet him in the court of heaven  
 I shall not know him: therefore never, never  
 Must I behold my pretty Arthur more.

PAND. You hold too heinous a respect of grief. 90

CONST. He talks to me that never had a son.

K. PHI. You are as fond of grief as of your child.

CONST. Grief fills the room up of my absent child,  
 Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,  
 Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,  
 Remembers me of all his gracious parts,  
 Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form;  
 Then have I reason to be fond of grief.  
 Fare you well: had you such a loss as I,  
 I could give better comfort than you do. 100  
 I will not keep this form upon my head,  
 When there is such disorder in my wit.  
 O Lord! my boy, my Arthur, my fair son!  
 My life, my joy, my food, my all the world!  
 My widow-comfort, and my sorrows' cure! [Exit.

---

82 *canker sorrow*] sorrow like a canker-worm. The words are hyphenated in the Folios.

90 *You hold . . . grief*] You commit heinous sin in paying excessive regard to your grief, in making too much of it.

91 *He talks . . . had a son*] Cf. Macduff's exclamation of Macbeth, "He has no children" (*Macb.* IV, iii, 216).

96 *parts*] qualities.

K. PHI. I fear some outrage, and I'll follow her. [*Exit.*]

LEW. There's nothing in this world can make me joy:  
Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale  
Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man;  
And bitter shame hath spoil'd the sweet world's taste,  
That it yields nought but shame and bitterness. 111

PAND. Before the curing of a strong disease,  
Even in the instant of repair and health,  
The fit is strongest; evils that take leave,  
On their departure most of all show evil:  
What have you lost by losing of this day?

LEW. All days of glory, joy and happiness.

PAND. If you had won it, certainly you had.  
No, no; when Fortune means to men most good,  
She looks upon them with a threatening eye. 120  
'Tis strange to think how much King John hath lost  
In this which he accounts so clearly won:  
Are not you grieved that Arthur is his prisoner?

LEW. As heartily as he is glad he hath him.

PAND. Your mind is all as youthful as your blood.  
Now hear me speak with a prophetic spirit;  
For even the breath of what I mean to speak  
Shall blow each dust, each straw, each little rub,

108 *Life . . . tale*] Cf. *Macb.* V, v, 26-27: "It [*i. e.*, life] is a *tale*, Told by an idiot, etc." See also *Psalm*, xc, 9: "we spend our years as a *tale* that is told."

110 *the sweet world's taste*] Pope's generally accepted emendation of the Folios' reading *the sweet words taste*. But *the sweet word* of the Folios which is clearly "life" might well be retained (line 108, *supra*).

128 *rub*] technical term for obstruction in the game of bowls.

Out of the path which shall directly lead  
Thy foot to England's throne; and therefore mark. 130  
John hath seized Arthur; and it cannot be  
That, whiles warm life plays in that infant's veins,  
The misplaced John should entertain an hour,  
One minute, nay, one quiet breath of rest.  
A sceptre snatch'd with an unruly hand  
Must be as boisterously maintain'd as gain'd;  
And he that stands upon a slippery place  
Makes nice of no vile hold to stay him up:  
That John may stand, then Arthur needs must fall;  
So be it, for it cannot be but so. 140

LEW. But what shall I gain by young Arthur's fall?

PAND. You, in the right of Lady Blanch your wife,  
May then make all the claim that Arthur did.

LEW. And lose it, life and all, as Arthur did.

PAND. How green you are and fresh in this old  
world!

John lays you plots; the times conspire with you;  
For he that steeps his safety in true blood  
Shall find but bloody safety and untrue.  
This act so evilly born shall cool the hearts  
Of all his people and freeze up their zeal, 150  
That none so small advantage shall step forth  
To check his reign, but they will cherish it;  
No natural exhalation in the sky,

138 *Makes nice of*] Scrupulous about, sticks at.

146 *John lays you plots*] John lays plots in your interest.

147 *true blood*] pure, innocent blood. It is unnecessary to interpret the words as "blood of the rightful claimant to the throne."

No scope of nature, no distemper'd day,  
 No common wind, no custom'd event,  
 But they will pluck away his natural cause  
 And call them meteors, prodigies and signs,  
 Abortives, presages and tongues of heaven,  
 Plainly denouncing vengeance upon John.

LEW. May be he will not touch young Arthur's life,  
 But hold himself safe in his prisonment. 161

PAND. O, sir, when he shall hear of your approach,  
 If that young Arthur be not gone already,  
 Even at that news he dies; and then the hearts  
 Of all his people shall revolt from him,  
 And kiss the lips of unacquainted change,  
 And pick strong matter of revolt and wrath  
 Out of the bloody fingers' ends of John.  
 Methinks I see this hurly all on foot:  
 And, O, what better matter breeds for you 170  
 Than I have named! The bastard Faulconbridge  
 Is now in England, ransacking the church,  
 Offending charity: if but a dozen French  
 Were there in arms, they would be as a call  
 To train ten thousand English to their side,  
 Or as a little snow, tumbled about,

154 *No scope of nature*] Nothing falling within the ordinary scope of nature.

156 *his natural cause*] its (the event's) natural cause.

158 *Abortives*] Abortions.

166 *unacquainted*] unknown, unwonted.

169 *hurly*] uproar, tumult; a form of hurlyburly.

174-175 *a call To train*] a cry to allure or entice. The terms belong to the practice of bird-catching.

## SCENE IV

## KING JOHN

Anon becomes a mountain. O noble Dauphin,  
Go with me to the king: 't is wonderful  
What may be wrought out of their discontent,  
Now that their souls are topful of offence. 180  
For England go: I will whet on the king.

LEW. Strong reasons make strong actions: let us go:  
If you say ay, the king will not say no. [Exeunt.]

182 *strong actions*] Thus the Second and later Folios. The First Folio  
reads *strange actions*.

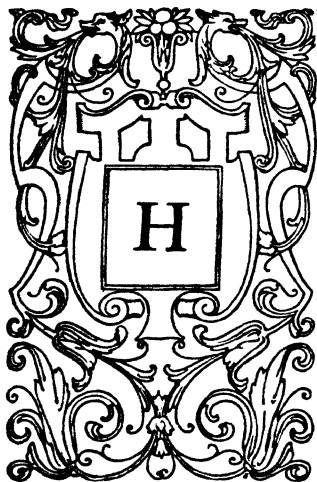


## ACT FOURTH — SCENE I

*A ROOM IN A CASTLE*

*Enter HUBERT and Executioners*

HUBERT



EAT ME THESE IRONS

hot; and look thou stand  
Within the arras: when I strike  
my foot

Upon the bosom of the ground,  
rush forth,

And bind the boy which you  
shall find with me

Fast to the chair: be heedful:  
hence, and watch.

FIRST EXEC. I hope your  
warrant will bear out the deed.

HUB. Uncleanly scruples!  
fear not you: look to 't.

*[Exeunt Executioners.]*

Young lad, come forth; I have to say with you.

*Enter ARTHUR*

ARTH. Good morrow, Hubert.

HUB.

Good morrow, little prince.

ARTH. As little prince, having so great a title 10  
To be more prince, as may be. You are sad.

HUB. Indeed, I have been merrier.

ARTH. Mercy on me!

Methinks no body should be sad but I:

Yet, I remember, when I was in France,

Young gentlemen would be as sad as night,

Only for wantonness. By my christendom,

So I were out of prison and kept sheep,

I should be as merry as the day is long;

And so I would be here, but that I doubt

My uncle practises more harm to me: 20

He is afraid of me and I of him:

Is it my fault that I was Geffrey's son?

No, indeed, is 't not; and I would to heaven

I were your son, so you would love me, Hubert.

HUB. [*Aside*] If I talk to him, with his innocent prate

He will awake my mercy which lies dead:

Therefore I will be sudden and dispatch.

2 *Within the arras*] Behind the tapestry or hangings.

3 *the bosom*] the surface.

7 *Uncleanly scruples*] Thus the Folios. Both *unmanly* and *unseemly* have been substituted. But Hubert is speaking hastily and denounces as "foul" any doubt of his commission.

16 *for wantonness*] for freakishness or whimsical affectation. It was at one time a fashionable craze among Elizabethan youths to pretend a deep melancholy.

*christendom*] faith as a Christian.

19 *doubt*] fear, as in IV, ii, 102, V, vi, 44, *infra*. Cf. line 130, *infra*: "doubtless," *i. e.*, fearless.

20 *practises*] wickedly contrives.



ARTH. Are you sick, Hubert? you look pale to-day:  
In sooth, I would you were a little sick,  
That I might sit all night and watch with you: 30  
I warrant I love you more than you do me.

HUB. [*Aside*] His words do take possession of my  
bosom.

Read here, young Arthur. [*Showing a paper.*  
[*Aside*] How now, foolish rheum!

Turning despiteous torture out of door!  
I must be brief, lest resolution drop  
Out at mine eyes in tender womanish tears.  
Can you not read it? is it not fair writ?

ARTH. Too fairly, Hubert, for so foul effect:  
Must you with hot irons burn out both mine eyes?

HUB. Young boy, I must.

ARTH. And will you?

HUB. And I will.

ARTH. Have you the heart? When your head did  
but ache, 41

I knit my handkercher about your brows,  
The best I had, a princess wrought it me,  
And I did never ask it you again;  
And with my hand at midnight held your head,  
And like the watchful minutes to the hour,  
Still and anon cheer'd up the heavy time,  
Saying, "What lack you?" and "Where lies your  
grief?"

34 *dispiteous*] pitiless.

46 *watchful minutes to the hour*] minutes which keep regular and faithful watch while the hour is completing its course.

47 *Still and anon*] Every now and then.

Or "What good love may I perform for you?"  
Many a poor man's son would have lien still  
And ne'er have spoke a loving word to you;  
But you at your sick service had a prince.  
Nay, you may think my love was crafty love,  
And call it cunning: do, an if you will:  
If heaven be pleased that you must use me ill,  
Why then you must. Will you put out mine eyes?  
These eyes that never did nor never shall  
So much as frown on you.

50

HUB. I have sworn to do it;  
And with hot irons must I burn them out.

ARTH. Ah, none but in this iron age would do it!  
The iron of itself, though heat red-hot,  
Approaching near these eyes, would drink my tears  
And quench his fiery indignation  
Even in the matter of mine innocence;  
Nay, after that, consume away in rust,  
But for containing fire to harm mine eye.  
Are you more stubborn-hard than hammer'd iron?  
An if an angel should have come to me  
And told me Hubert should put out mine eyes,  
I would not have believed him, — no tongue but  
Hubert's.

70

HUB. Come forth.

[Stamps.

52 *at your sick service*] at your service in your sickness.

63 *his*] its. Capell's ingenious emendation of the Folio reading *this*.

64 *matter*] Thus the Folios. Dyce and others ingeniously substitute  
*water*. Cf. IV, iii, 107 *seq.*, *infra*: "Trust not those cunning *waters*  
of his eyes . . . like *rivers* of remorse and *innocency*."

*Re-enter Executioners, with a cord, irons, &c.*

Do as I bid you do.

ARTH. O, save me, Hubert, save me! my eyes are out  
Even with the fierce looks of these bloody men.

HUB. Give me the iron, I say, and bind him here.

ARTH. Alas, what need you be so boisterous-rough?  
I will not struggle, I will stand stone-still.

For heaven sake, Hubert, let me not be bound!

Nay, hear me, Hubert, drive these men away,

And I will sit as quiet as a lamb;

80

I will not stir, nor wince, nor speak a word,

Nor look upon the iron angrily:

Thrust but these men away, and I'll forgive you,

Whatever torment you do put me to.

HUB. Go, stand within; let me alone with him.

FIRST EXEC. I am best pleased to be from such a  
deed. *[Exeunt Executioners.]*

ARTH. Alas, I then have chid away my friend!

He hath a stern look, but a gentle heart:

Let him come back, that his compassion may

Give life to yours.

HUB. Come, boy, prepare yourself.

90

ARTH. Is there no remedy?

HUB. None, but to lose your eyes.

ARTH. O heaven, that there were but a mote in  
yours,

A grain, a dust, a gnat, a wandering hair,

Any annoyance in that precious sense!

Then, feeling what small things are boisterous there,

Your vile intent must needs seem horrible.





HUB. Is this your promise? go to, hold your tongue.

ARTH. Hubert, the utterance of a brace of tongues  
Must needs want pleading for a pair of eyes:  
Let me not hold my tongue, let me not, Hubert; 100  
Or, Hubert, if you will, cut out my tongue,  
So I may keep mine eyes: O, spare mine eyes,  
Though to no use but still to look on you!  
Lo, by my troth, the instrument is cold  
And would not harm me.

HUB. I can heat it, boy.

ARTH. No, in good sooth; the fire is dead with grief,  
Being create for comfort, to be used  
In undeserved extremes: see else yourself;  
There is no malice in this burning coal;  
The breath of heaven hath blown his spirit out 110  
And strew'd repentant ashes on his head.

HUB. But with my breath I can revive it, boy.

ARTH. An if you do, you will but make it blush  
And glow with shame of your proceedings, Hubert:  
Nay, it perchance will sparkle in your eyes;  
And like a dog that is compell'd to fight,  
Snatch at his master that doth tarre him on.  
All things that you should use to do me wrong  
Deny their office: only you do lack  
That mercy which fierce fire and iron extends, 120  
Creatures of note for mercy-lacking uses.

99 *want pleading*] lack power of pleading.

107-108 *to be used In undeserved extremes*] at being used in extreme acts  
of cruelty which are unmerited.

117 *Snatch . . . tarre*] Snap . . . incite to fight.

121 *Creatures . . . uses*] Things famous for their cruel uses.

HUB. Well, see to live; I will not touch thine eye  
For all the treasure that thine uncle owes:  
Yet am I sworn and I did purpose, boy,  
With this same very iron to burn them out.

ARTH. O, now you look like Hubert! all this while  
You were disguised.

HUB. Peace; no more. Adieu.  
Your uncle must not know but you are dead;  
I'll fill these dogged spies with false reports:  
And, pretty child, sleep doubtless and secure, 130  
That Hubert, for the wealth of all the world,  
Will not offend thee.

ARTH. O heaven! I thank you, Hubert.

HUB. Silence; no more: go closely in with me:  
Much danger do I undergo for thee. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II — KING JOHN'S PALACE

*Enter KING JOHN, PEMBROKE, SALISBURY, and other Lords*

K. JOHN. Here once again we sit, once again crown'd,  
And look'd upon, I hope, with cheerful eyes.

PEM. This "once again," but that your highness  
pleased,

Was once superfluous: you were crown'd before,  
And that high royalty was ne'er pluck'd off,  
The faiths of men ne'er stained with revolt;

130 *doubtless and secure*] without fear and in confidence.

132 *offend*] hurt.

133 *closely*] secretly.

4 *once superfluous*] once too often.

Fresh expectation troubled not the land  
With any long'd-for change or better state.

SAL. Therefore, to be possess'd with double pomp,  
To guard a title that was rich before, 10  
To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,  
To throw a perfume on the violet,  
To smooth the ice, or add another hue  
Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light  
To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,  
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.

PEM. But that your royal pleasure must be done,  
This act is as an ancient tale new told,  
And in the last repeating troublesome,  
Being urged at a time unseasonable. 20

SAL. In this the antique and well noted face  
Of plain old form is much disfigured;  
And, like a shifted wind unto a sail,  
It makes the course of thoughts to fetch about,  
Startles and frights consideration,  
Makes sound opinion sick and truth suspected,  
For putting on so new a fashion'd robe.

PEM. When workmen strive to do better than well,  
They do confound their skill in covetousness;  
And oftentimes excusing of a fault 30  
Doth make the fault the worse by the excuse,  
As patches set upon a little breach

10 *guard*] ornament with trimmings, fringe, or facings.

24 *fetch about*] tack about, take a devious course, veer round.

29 *covetousness*] over-eager anxiety to excel others, to win fame.

32 *breach*] rent, tear.



Discredit more in hiding of the fault  
Than did the fault before it was so patch'd.

SAL. To this effect, before you were new crown'd,  
We breathed our counsel: but it pleased your highness  
To overbear it, and we are all well pleased,  
Since all and every part of what we would  
Doth make a stand at what your highness will.

K. JOHN. Some reasons of this double coronation 40  
I have possess'd you with and think them strong;  
And more, more strong, then lesser is my fear,  
I shall indue you with: meantime but ask  
What you would have reform'd that is not well,  
And well shall you perceive how willingly  
I will both hear and grant you your requests.

PEM. Then I, as one that am the tongue of these,  
To sound the purposes of all their hearts,  
Both for myself and them, but, chief of all,  
Your safety, for the which myself and them 50  
Bend their best studies, heartily request  
The enfranchisement of Arthur; whose restraint  
Doth move the murmuring lips of discontent  
To break into this dangerous argument,—

38-39 *Since all . . . your highness will*] Since all our desires stop short  
at, yield to, the will of your highness.

42-43 *And more, more strong . . . indue you with*] Thus the First Folio.  
The meaning seems to be: "I shall impart to you many more and  
more powerful reasons for my double coronation, and then my fear  
(of your disapproval) will proportionately grow less."

48 *sound*] express, disclose.

50 *myself and them*] myself and they: a careless repetition of these  
words from the previous line.

If what in rest you have in right you hold,  
 Why then your fears, which as they say, attend  
 The steps of wrong, should move you to mew up  
 Your tender kinsman, and to choke his days  
 With barbarous ignorance, and deny his youth  
 The rich advantage of good exercise?  
 That the time's enemies may not have this  
 To grace occasions, let it be our suit  
 That you have bid us ask his liberty;  
 Which for our goods we do no further ask  
 Than whereupon our weal, on you depending,  
 Counts it your weal he have his liberty.

60

*Enter* HUBERT

K. JOHN. Let it be so: I do commit his youth  
 To your direction. Hubert, what news with you?

*[Taking him apart.]*

PEM. This is the man should do the bloody deed;  
 He show'd his warrant to a friend of mine:  
 The image of a wicked heinous fault  
 Lives in his eye; that close aspect of his

70

55 *If what in rest . . . you hold*] If what you have peaceful and secure  
 possession of, you hold lawfully.

57 *mew up*] confine: used technically of hawks.

61-62 *That the time's enemies . . . To grace occasions*] That agitators  
 against the settled order of the age shall not have this cry to im-  
 prove their opportunities of attack, to grace their campaign.

64-66 *Which for our goods . . . his liberty*] Which we ask for our advan-  
 tage, only in so far as study of our welfare, which is dependent  
 on you, reckons it to be for your welfare and to your benefit that  
 Arthur should have his liberty.

72 *close aspect*] look of secrecy.

Does show the mood of a much troubled breast;  
And I do fearfully believe 't is done,  
What we so fear'd he had a charge to do.

SAL. The colour of the king doth come and go  
Between his purpose and his conscience,  
Like heralds 'twixt two dreadful battles set:  
His passion is so ripe, it needs must break.

PEM. And when it breaks, I fear will issue thence 80  
The foul corruption of a sweet child's death.

K. JOHN. We cannot hold mortality's strong hand:  
Good lords, although my will to give is living,  
The suit which you demand is gone and dead:  
He tells us Arthur is deceased to-night.

SAL. Indeed we fear'd his sickness was past cure.

PEM. Indeed we heard how near his death he was,  
Before the child himself felt he was sick:  
This must be answer'd either here or hence.

K. JOHN. Why do you bend such solemn brows on  
me? 90

Think you I bear the shears of destiny?  
Have I commandment on the pulse of life?

SAL. It is apparent foul-play; and 't is shame  
That greatness should so grossly offer it:  
So thrive it in your game! and so, farewell.

PEM. Stay yet, Lord Salisbury; I'll go with thee,

---

77 *his purpose*] his wicked purpose of murdering Arthur.

78 *battles*] armies in battle array.

79 *His passion . . . break*] The image is that of a boil or tumour.

93 *apparent*] manifest.

95 *So thrive it in your game!*] Shamefully may your greatness thrive in  
the game you are playing!

And find the inheritance of this poor child,  
 His little kingdom of a forced grave.  
 That blood which owed the breadth of all this isle,  
 Three foot of it doth hold: bad world the while! 100  
 This must not be thus borne: this will break out  
 To all our sorrows, and ere long I doubt. [*Exeunt Lords.*]

K. JOHN. They burn in indignation. I repent:  
 There is no sure foundation set on blood,  
 No certain life achieved by others' death.

*Enter a Messenger*

A fearful eye thou hast: where is that blood  
 That I have seen inhabit in those cheeks?  
 So foul a sky clears not without a storm:  
 Pour down thy weather: how goes all in France?

MESS. From France to England. Never such a  
 power 110

For any foreign preparation  
 Was levied in the body of a land.  
 The copy of your speed is learn'd by them;  
 For when you should be told they do prepare,  
 The tidings comes that they are all arrived.

K. JOHN. O, where hath our intelligence been drunk?  
 Where hath it slept? Where is my mother's care,

102 *doubt*] fear; as in IV, i, 19, *supra*, and V, vi, 44, *infra*. Cf. IV, i, 130, "doubtless" (*i. e.*, fearless).

106 *fearful*] full of fear, frightened.

110 *From France to England*] "All goes from France to invade England;" a quibbling reply to the question "How goes all in France?"

116-117 *O, where hath . . . it slept?*] Cf. *Macb.* I, vii, 35-36: "Was the hope drunk Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it *slept* since?"

117 *care*] Thus the Second and later Folios. The First Folio prints the

That such an army could be drawn in France,  
And she not hear of it?

MESS. My liege, her ear  
Is stopp'd with dust; the first of April died 120  
Your noble mother: and, as I hear, my lord,  
The Lady Constance in a frenzy died  
Three days before: but this from rumour's tongue  
I idly heard; if true or false I know not.

K. JOHN. Withhold thy speed, dreadful occasion!  
O, make a league with me, till I have pleased  
My discontented peers! What! mother dead!  
How wildly then walks my estate in France!  
Under whose conduct came those powers of France  
That thou for truth givest out are landed here? 130

MESS. Under the Dauphin.

K. JOHN. Thou hast made me giddy  
With these ill tidings.

*Enter the BASTARD and PETER of Pomfret*

Now, what says the world  
To your proceedings? do not seek to stuff  
My head with more ill news, for it is full.

word obscurely, and it has been read both *eare* and *care*. *Eare* is not satisfactory here.

118 *drawn*] levied; cf. V, ii, 113: "drew."

120 *the first of April*] This is the precise date of Queen Elinor's death, in the year 1204.

122 *The Lady Constance . . . died*] Constance predeceased Queen Elinor, in 1201, by three years, not, as in the text, by three days.

128 *How wildly . . . my estate*] How unsteadily goes, how tottering is, the state of my affairs.

BAST. But if you be afeard to hear the worst,  
Then let the worst unheard fall on your head.

K. JOHN. Bear with me, cousin; for I was amazed  
Under the tide: but now I breathe again  
Aloft the flood, and can give audience  
To any tongue, speak it of what it will. 140

BAST. How I have sped among the clergy-men,  
The sums I have collected shall express.  
But as I travell'd hither through the land,  
I find the people strangely fantasied;  
Possess'd with rumours, full of idle dreams,  
Not knowing what they fear, but full of fear:  
And here's a prophet, that I brought with me  
From forth the streets of Pomfret, whom I found  
With many hundreds treading on his heels;  
To whom he sung, in rude harsh-sounding rhymes, 150  
That, ere the next Ascension-day at noon,  
Your highness should deliver up your crown.

K. JOHN. Thou idle dreamer, wherefore didst thou  
so?

PETER. Foreknowing that the truth will fall out so.

K. JOHN. Hubert, away with him; imprison him;  
And on that day at noon, whereon he says  
I shall yield up my crown, let him be hang'd.  
Deliver him to safety; and return,

138 *Under the tide*] King John compares himself to a swimmer, first,  
bewildered and overwhelmed by the tide (of bad news) and, then,  
mastering the rush of water.

144 *strangely fantasied*] subject to strange fancies.

158 *to safety*] to safe-keeping, safe-custody.

For I must use thee. *[Exit Hubert with Peter.]*

O my gentle cousin,  
Hear'st thou the news abroad, who are arrived? 160

BAST. The French, my lord; men's mouths are full  
of it:

Besides, I met Lord Bigot and Lord Salisbury,  
With eyes as red as new-enkindled fire,  
And others more, going to seek the grave  
Of Arthur, whom they say is kill'd to-night  
On your suggestion.

K. JOHN. Gentle kinsman, go,  
And thrust thyself into their companies:  
I have a way to win their loves again;  
Bring them before me.

BAST. I will seek them out.

K. JOHN. Nay, but make haste; the better foot  
before. 170

O, let me have no subject enemies,  
When adverse foreigners affright my towns  
With dreadful pomp of stout invasion!  
Be Mercury, set feathers to thy heels,  
And fly like thought from them to me again.

BAST. The spirit of the time shall teach me speed. *[Exit.]*

K. JOHN. Spoke like a sprightly noble gentleman.  
Go after him; for he perhaps shall need  
Some messenger betwixt me and the peers;  
And be thou he.

163 *as red*] *sc.* with anger.

171 *subject*] Thus the First Folio, which the Second and later Folios change to *subjects*. In any case, *subject* must be allotted a plural significance, like "people."

MESS. With all my heart, my liege. [*Exit.* 180  
K. JOHN. My mother dead!

*Re-enter* HUBERT

HUB. My lord, they say five moons were seen to-night;  
Four fixed, and the fifth did whirl about  
The other four in wondrous motion.

K. JOHN. Five moons!

HUB. Old men and beldams in the streets  
Do prophesy upon it dangerously:  
Young Arthur's death is common in their mouths:  
And when they talk of him, they shake their heads  
And whisper one another in the ear;  
And he that speaks doth gripe the hearer's wrist, 190  
Whilst he that hears makes fearful action,  
With wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes.  
I saw a smith stand with his hammer, thus,  
The whilst his iron did on the anvil cool,  
With open mouth swallowing a tailor's news;  
Who, with his shears and measure in his hand,  
Standing on slippers, which his nimble haste  
Had falsely thrust upon contrary feet,  
Told of a many thousand warlike French  
That were embattailed and rank'd in Kent: 200  
Another lean unwash'd artificer  
Cuts off his tale and talks of Arthur's death.

K. JOHN. Why seek'st thou to possess me with these  
fears?

---

198 *contrary feet*] the left foot into the right slipper, and *vice versa*.

"Contrary" is accented on the second syllable.

200 *embattailed*] drawn up in order of battle.



Why urgest thou so oft young Arthur's death?  
 Thy hand hath murder'd him: I had a mighty cause  
 To wish him dead, but thou hadst none to kill him.

HUB. No had, my lord! why, did you not provoke  
 me?

K. JOHN. It is the curse of kings to be attended  
 By slaves that take their humours for a warrant  
 To break within the bloody house of life, 210  
 And on the winking of authority  
 To understand a law, to know the meaning  
 Of dangerous majesty, when perchance it frowns  
 More upon humour than advised respect.

HUB. Here is your hand and seal for what I did.

K. JOHN. O, when the last account 'twixt heaven and  
 earth

Is to be made, then shall this hand and seal  
 Witness against us to damnation!  
 How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds  
 Make deeds ill done! Hadst not thou been by, 220  
 A fellow by the hand of nature mark'd,  
 Quoted and sign'd to do a deed of shame,  
 This murder had not come into my mind:  
 But taking note of thy abhorr'd aspect,

---

207 *provoke*] incite.

214 *More . . . respect*] From mere whim or caprice rather than from deliberate judgment.

220 *deeds ill*] Thus the Folios. Capell transposes the words, but the old reading makes the sense evident.

222 *Quoted*] The word is often used of books with annotations in the margin confirmatory of the text. Here the sense is "fully indicated" or "certified."

Finding thee fit for bloody villany,  
 Apt, liable to be employ'd in danger,  
 I faintly broke with thee of Arthur's death;  
 And thou, to be endeared to a king,  
 Made it no conscience to destroy a prince.

HUB. My lord, —

230

K. JOHN. Hadst thou but shook thy head or made a  
 pause

When I spake darkly what I purposed,  
 Or turn'd an eye of doubt upon my face,  
 As bid me tell my tale in express words,  
 Deep shame had struck me dumb, made me break off,  
 And those thy fears might have wrought fears in me:  
 But thou didst understand me by my signs  
 And didst in signs again parley with sin;  
 Yea, without stop, didst let thy heart consent,  
 And consequently thy rude hand to act

240

The deed, which both our tongues held vile to name.  
 Out of my sight, and never see me more!  
 My nobles leave me; and my state is braved,  
 Even at my gates, with ranks of foreign powers:  
 Nay, in the body of this fleshly land,  
 This kingdom, this confine of blood and breath,  
 Hostility and civil tumult reigns  
 Between my conscience and my cousin's death.

HUB. Arm you against your other enemies,  
 I'll make a peace between your soul and you.

250

226 *liable . . . danger*] disposed for employment<sup>\*</sup> in designs of danger.

246 *this confine of blood and breath*] my corporeal frame. Cf. III, iv,

19, *supra*, "the vile prison of afflicted breath."

Young Arthur is alive: this hand of mine  
Is yet a maiden and an innocent hand,  
Not painted with the crimson spots of blood.  
Within this bosom never enter'd yet  
The dreadful motion of a murderous thought;  
And you have slander'd nature in my form,  
Which, howsoever rude exteriorly,  
Is yet the cover of a fairer mind  
Than to be butcher of an innocent child.

K. JOHN. Doth Arthur live? O, haste thee to the  
peers,

260

Throw this report on their incensed rage,  
And make them tame to their obedience!  
Forgive the comment that my passion made  
Upon thy feature; for my rage was blind,  
And foul imaginary eyes of blood  
Presented thee more hideous than thou art.  
O, answer not, but to my closet bring  
The angry lords with all expedient haste.  
I conjure thee but slowly; run more fast.

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE III — BEFORE THE CASTLE

*Enter ARTHUR, on the walls*

ARTH. The wall is high, and yet will I leap down:  
Good ground, be pitiful and hurt me not!  
There's few or none do know me: if they did,

---

255 *motion*] suggestion, prompting. Hubert manifestly exaggerates the  
fact in denying all thought of murdering Arthur. Cf. IV, i, 25-27,  
*supra.*

This ship-boy's semblance hath disguised me quite.  
 I am afraid; and yet I'll venture it.  
 If I get down, and do not break my limbs,  
 I'll find a thousand shifts to get away:  
 As good to die and go, as die and stay. [*Leaps down.*  
 O me! my uncle's spirit is in these stones:  
 Heaven take my soul, and England keep my bones! 10  
[*Dies.*

*Enter PEMBROKE, SALISBURY, and BIGOT*

SAL. Lords, I will meet him at Saint Edmundsbury:  
 It is our safety, and we must embrace  
 This gentle offer of the perilous time.

PEM. Who brought that letter from the cardinal?

SAL. The Count Melun, a noble lord of France;  
 Whose private with me of the Dauphin's love  
 Is much more general than these lines import.

BIG. To-morrow morning let us meet him then.

SAL. Or rather then set forward; for 't will be  
 Two long days' journey, lords, or ere we meet. 20

*Enter the BASTARD*

BAST. Once more to-day well met, distemper'd lords!  
 The king by me requests your presence straight.

4 *semblance*] disguise.

11 *him*] *i. e.*, the Dauphin.

16 *Whose private with me*] Thus the Folios. The text is suspicious.  
 For *with me* one editor reads *missive* and another *witness*. "Private"  
 must mean elliptically "private talk" or "intimation."

17 *general*] ample.

21 *distemper'd*] ruffled, out of temper. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 292-294:  
 "The King, sir, . . . Is marvellous *distempered*."

SAL. The king hath dispossess'd himself of us :  
 We will not line his thin bestained cloak  
 With our pure honours, nor attend the foot  
 That leaves the print of blood where'er it walks.  
 Return and tell him so : we know the worst.

BAST. Whate'er you think, good words, I think, were  
 best.

SAL. Our griefs, and not our manners, reason now.

BAST. But there is little reason in your grief ; 30  
 Therefore 't were reason you had manners now.

PEM. Sir, sir, impatience hath his privilege.

BAST. 'T is true, to hurt his master, no man else.

SAL. This is the prison. What is he lies here ?

[*Seeing Arthur.*]

PEM. O death, made proud with pure and princely  
 beauty !

The earth hath not a hole to hide this deed.

SAL. Murder, as hating what himself hath done,  
 Doth lay it open to urge on revenge.

BIG. Or, when doom'd this beauty to a grave,  
 Found it too precious-princely for a grave. 40

SAL. Sir Richard, what think you ? have you beheld,  
 Or have you read or heard ? or could you think ?  
 Or do you almost think, although you see,  
 That you do see ? could thought, without this object,  
 Form such another ? This is the very top,

29 *reason*] talk, discourse.

32 *impatience hath his privilege*] Cf. *Lear*, II, ii, 65: "*anger hath a privilege.*"

40 *precious-princely*] Capell first hyphenated these words.

The height, the crest, or crest unto the crest,  
 Of murder's arms: this is the bloodiest shame,  
 The wildest savagery, the vilest stroke,  
 That ever wall-eyed wrath or staring rage  
 Presented to the tears of soft remorse.

50

PEM. All murders past do stand excused in this:  
 And this, so sole and so unmatchable,  
 Shall give a holiness, a purity,  
 To the yet unbegotten sin of times;  
 And prove a deadly bloodshed but a jest,  
 Exemplified by this heinous spectacle.

BAST. It is a damned and a bloody work;  
 The graceless action of a heavy hand,  
 If that it be the work of any hand.

SAL. If that it be the work of any hand!  
 We had a kind of light what would ensue:  
 It is the shameful work of Hubert's hand;  
 The practice and the purpose of the king:  
 From whose obedience I forbid my soul,  
 Kneeling before this ruin of sweet life,  
 And breathing to his breathless excellence  
 The incense of a vow, a holy vow,  
 Never to taste the pleasures of the world,  
 Never to be infected with delight,  
 Nor conversant with ease and idleness,

60

70

---

49 *wall-eyed*] glaring-eyed. Cf. *Tit. Andr.*, V, i, 44: "*wall-eyed slave*"  
 (i. e., the savage Aaron). "Wall," "whaul," or "whall" was a  
 common name of the disease glaucoma, which discoloured the eye  
 and abnormally enlarged the white portions.

50 *remorse*] pity. Cf. II, i, 478, *supra*, and line 110, *infra*.

54 *sin of times*] sin of future times.

Till I have set a glory to this hand,  
By giving it the worship of revenge.

PEM. }  
BIG. } Our souls religiously confirm thy words.

*Enter* HUBERT

HUB. Lords, I am hot with haste in seeking you:  
Arthur doth live; the king hath sent for you.

SAL. O, he is bold and blushes not at death.  
Avaunt, thou hateful villain, get thee gone!

HUB. I am no villain.

SAL. Must I rob the law?

*[Drawing his sword.]*

BAST. Your sword is bright, sir; put it up again.

SAL. Not till I sheathe it in a murderer's skin. 80

HUB. Stand back, Lord Salisbury, stand back, I say;  
By heaven, I think my sword's as sharp as yours:  
I would not have you, lord, forget yourself,  
Nor tempt the danger of my true defence;  
Lest I, by marking of your rage, forget  
Your worth, your greatness and nobility.

BIG. Out, dunghill! darest thou brave a nobleman?

HUB. Not for my life: but yet I dare defend  
My innocent life against an emperor.

72 *the worship of revenge*] the honour and dignity due to the performance of an act of vengeance.

79 *Your sword is bright*] Cf. *Othello*, I, ii, 59: "Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them."

84 *the danger of my true defence*] the danger of encountering me when making defence of my honesty.

87 *Out, dunghill*] a common term of opprobrium: repeated in *Lear*, IV, vi, 245.

SAL. Thou art a murderer.

HUB. Do not prove me so; 90

Yet I am none: whose tongue soe'er speaks false,  
Not truly speaks; who speaks not truly, lies.

PEM. Cut him to pieces.

BAST. Keep the peace, I say.

SAL. Stand by, or I shall gall you, Faulconbridge.

BAST. Thou wert better gall the devil, Salisbury:

If thou but frown on me, or stir thy foot,  
Or teach thy hasty spleen to do me shame,  
I'll strike thee dead. Put up thy sword betime;  
Or I'll so maul you and your toasting-iron,  
That you shall think the devil is come from hell. 100

BIG. What wilt thou do, renowned Faulconbridge?  
Second a villain and a murderer?

HUB. Lord Bigot, I am none.

BIG. Who kill'd this prince?

HUB. 'T is not an hour since I left him well:

I honour'd him, I loved him, and will weep  
My date of life out for his sweet life's loss.

SAL. Trust not those cunning waters of his eyes,  
For villany is not without such rheum;  
And he, long traded in it, makes it seem

90-91 *Do not . . . am none*] Do not make me a murderer by forcing me to kill you. Hitherto, as yet, I am no murderer.

94 *gall*] hurt, torment.

99 *toasting-iron*] Similarly Nym in *Hen. V*, II, i, 7-8, calls his sword "mine iron," and says of it: "It will *toast* cheese."

106 *date*] term.

109 *traded*] practised.



Like rivers of remorse and innocence. 110  
 Away with me, all you whose souls abhor  
 The uncleanly savours of a slaughter-house;  
 For I am stifled with this smell of sin.

BIG. Away toward Bury, to the Dauphin there!

PEM. There tell the king he may inquire us out.

[*Exeunt Lords.*]

BAST. Here's a good world! Knew you of this fair  
 work?

Beyond the infinite and boundless reach  
 Of mercy, if thou didst this deed of death,  
 Art thou damn'd, Hubert.

HUB. Do but hear me, sir.

BAST. Ha! I'll tell thee what; 120

Thou 'rt damn'd as black — nay, nothing is so black;  
 Thou art more deep damn'd than Prince Lucifer:  
 There is not yet so ugly a fiend of hell  
 As thou shalt be, if thou didst kill this child.

HUB. Upon my soul —

BAST. If thou didst but consent

To this most cruel act, do but despair;  
 And if thou want'st a cord, the smallest thread  
 That ever spider twisted from her womb  
 Will serve to strangle thee; a rush will be a beam  
 To hang thee on; or wouldst thou drown thyself, 130  
 Put but a little water in a spoon,  
 And it shall be as all the ocean,

110 *remorse*] pity. Cf. line 50, *supra*, and also II, i, 478.

121 *damn'd as black*] A possible reminiscence of the blackened faces of those who played damned souls in the old miracle plays.

Enough to stifle such a villain up.  
I do suspect thee very grievously.

HUB. If I in act, consent, or sin of thought,  
Be guilty of the stealing that sweet breath  
Which was embounded in this beauteous clay,  
Let hell want pains enough to torture me.  
I left him well.

BAST. Go, bear him in thine arms.  
I am amazed, methinks, and lose my way 140  
Among the thorns and dangers of this world.  
How easy dost thou take all England up!  
From forth this morsel of dead royalty,  
The life, the right and truth of all this realm  
Is fled to heaven; and England now is left  
To tug and scramble and to part by the teeth  
The unowed interest of proud-swelling state.  
Now for the bare-pick'd bone of majesty  
Doth dogged war bristle his angry crest  
And snarleth in the gentle eyes of peace: 150  
Now powers from home and discontents at home  
Meet in one line; and vast confusion waits,  
As doth a raven on a sick-fallen beast,  
The imminent decay of wrested pomp.

133 *stifle . . . up*] “up” gives the verb the intensitive force of “smother.”

137 *embounded*] confined.

146 *scamble*] scramble, scuffle. Cf. *Hen. V*, I, i, 4: “the *scambling* and unquiet time.”

147 *unowed*] unowned, not in anybody's legal ownership.

152 *vast*] waste, wasting.

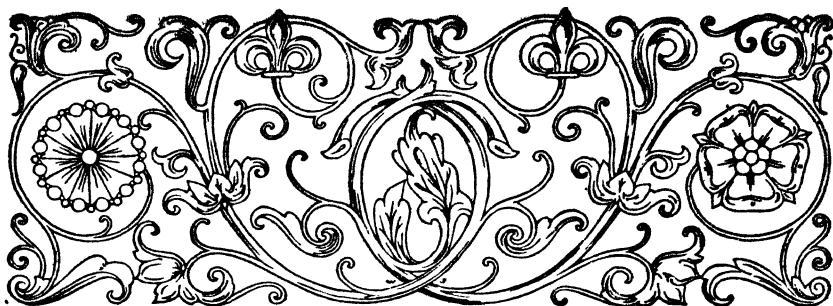
154 *wrested pomp*] greatness riotously wrested from its rightful owner.

Now happy he whose cloak and cincture can  
Hold out this tempest. Bear away that child  
And follow me with speed: I'll to the king:  
A thousand businesses are brief in hand,  
And heaven itself doth frown upon the land. [*Exeunt.*]

---

155 *cincture*] girdle, belt. The Folios read *center* (i. e., ceinture). Pope introduced the spelling *cincture*, which is rarely found in Elizabethan English.

158 *are brief in hand*] press for urgent despatch.

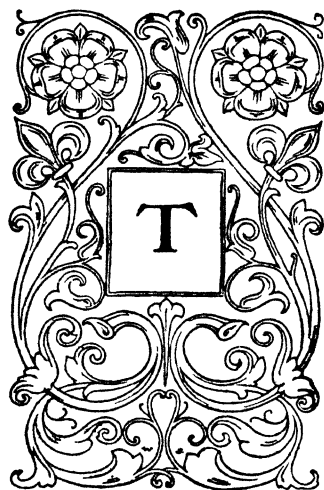


ACT FIFTH — SCENE I

KING JOHN'S PALACE

*Enter KING JOHN, PANDULPH, and Attendants*

KING JOHN



THUS HAVE I YIELDED UP  
into your hand  
The circle of my glory. [*Giving  
the crown.*]  
PAND. Take again  
From this my hand, as holding of  
the pope  
Your sovereign greatness and  
authority.  
K. JOHN. Now keep your  
holy word: go meet the French,  
And from his holiness use all  
your power  
To stop their marches 'fore we are inflamed.  
Our discontented counties do revolt;  
Our people quarrel with obedience,

<sup>2</sup> *The circle*] The crown encircling the head.

<sup>7</sup> *inflamed*] in flames, in conflagration.

# KING JOHN

## ACT V

Swearing allegiance and the love of soul 10  
 To stranger blood, to foreign royalty.  
 This inundation of mistempered humour  
 Rests by you only to be qualified:  
 Then pause not; for the present time's so sick,  
 That present medicine must be minister'd,  
 Or overthrow incurable ensues.

PAND. It was my breath that blew this tempest up,  
 Upon your stubborn usage of the pope;  
 But since you are a gentle convertite,  
 My tongue shall hush again this storm of war, 20  
 And make fair weather in your blustering land.  
 On this Ascension-day, remember well,  
 Upon your oath of service to the pope,  
 Go I to make the French lay down their arms. [*Exit.*]

K. JOHN. Is this Ascension-day? Did not the prophet  
 Say that before Ascension-day at noon  
 My crown I should give off? Even so I have:  
 I did suppose it should be on constraint;  
 But, heaven be thank'd, it is but voluntary.

*Enter the BASTARD*

BAST. All Kent hath yielded; nothing there holds out  
 But Dover Castle: London hath received, 31  
 Like a kind host, the Dauphin and his powers:  
 Your nobles will not hear you, but are gone

---

8 *counties*] counts, noblemen, in contrast with people in the next line;  
 not "shires."

10 *love of soul*] soul-felt love.

12 *mistempered*] disordered.

19 *convertite*] convert; especially a reclaimed apostate.

To offer service to your enemy,  
And wild amazement hurries up and down  
The little number of your doubtful friends.

K. JOHN. Would not my lords return to me again,  
After they heard young Arthur was alive?

BAST. They found him dead and cast into the streets,  
An empty casket, where the jewel of life 40  
By some damn'd hand was robb'd and ta'en away.

K. JOHN. That villain Hubert told me he did live.

BAST. So, on my soul, he did, for aught he knew.  
But wherefore do you droop? why look you sad?  
Be great in act, as you have been in thought;  
Let not the world see fear and sad distrust  
Govern the motion of a kingly eye:  
Be stirring as the time; be fire with fire;  
Threaten the threatener, and outface the brow  
Of bragging horror: so shall inferior eyes, 50  
That borrow their behaviours from the great,  
Grow great by your example and put on  
The dauntless spirit of resolution.  
Away, and glister like the god of war,  
When he intendeth to become the field:  
Show boldness and aspiring confidence.  
What, shall they seek the lion in his den,  
And fright him there? and make him tremble there?  
O, let it not be said: forage, and run

35 *amazement*] panic, bewilderment.

55 *to become the field*] to fit or adorn the field, to join the fight with befitting glory.

59 *forage*] range abroad in search of prey.

To meet displeasure farther from the doors, 60  
And grapple with him ere he come so nigh.

K. JOHN. The legate of the pope hath been with me,  
And I have made a happy peace with him;  
And he hath promised to dismiss the powers  
Led by the Dauphin.

BAST. O inglorious league!  
Shall we, upon the footing of our land,  
Send fair-play orders and make compromise,  
Insinuation, parley and base truce  
To arms invasive? shall a beardless boy,  
A cocker'd silken wanton, brave our fields, 70  
And flesh his spirit in a warlike soil,  
Mocking the air with colours idly spread,  
And find no check? Let us, my liege, to arms:  
Perchance the cardinal cannot make your peace;  
Or if he do, let it at least be said  
They saw we had a purpose of defence.

K. JOHN. Have thou the ordering of this present time.

BAST. Away, then, with good courage! yet, I know,  
Our party may well meet a prouder foe. [Exeunt.]

60 *displeasure*] disaster, annoyance.

66 *upon the footing of our land*] with our foot on our native land.

67 *fair-play orders*] stipulations of courteous conduct.

68 *Insinuation*] The act of ingratiating oneself, of making up to another.

69 *arms invasive*] invading forces.

70 *A cocker'd silken wanton*] A pampered daintily-arrayed effeminate.

71 *flesh his spirit in a warlike soil*] air his courage in a country of warriors.

78-79 *Away, then, . . . prouder foe*] On, then, with good hope. In spite of all omens I know that our side may well be able to cope with a stouter and more confident enemy.

SCENE II—THE DAUPHIN'S CAMP AT  
ST EDMUNDSBURY

*Enter, in arms, LEWIS, SALISBURY, MELUN, PEMBROKE, BIGOT,  
and Soldiers*

LEW. My Lord Melun, let this be copied out,  
And keep it safe for our remembrance:  
Return the precedent to these lords again;  
That, having our fair order written down,  
Both they and we, perusing o'er these notes,  
May know wherefore we took the sacrament  
And keep our faiths firm and inviolable.

SAL. Upon our sides it never shall be broken.  
And, noble Dauphin, albeit we swear  
A voluntary zeal and an unurged faith  
To your proceedings; yet believe me, prince,  
I am not glad that such a sore of time  
Should seek a plaster by contemn'd revolt,  
And heal the inveterate canker of one wound  
By making many. O, it grieves my soul,  
That I must draw this metal from my side  
To be a widow-maker! O, and there  
Where honourable rescue and defence

10

1 *this*] The first draft of the treaty with the English lords, which in line 3 is called "the precedent" (*i. e.*, the original document).

4 *our fair order*] our justly-arranged stipulation. Cf. V, i, 67, *supra*: "fair-play orders."

16 *metal*] sword (of iron). Cf. *Tw. Night*, IV, i, 38: "put up your iron."



Cries out upon the name of Salisbury !  
 But such is the infection of the time, 20  
 That, for the health and physic of our right,  
 We cannot deal but with the very hand  
 Of stern injustice and confused wrong.  
 And is't not pity, O my grieved friends,  
 That we, the sons and children of this isle,  
 Were born to see so sad an hour as this ;  
 Wherein we step after a stranger, march  
 Upon her gentle bosom, and fill up  
 Her enemies' ranks, — I must withdraw and weep 30  
 Upon the spot of this enforced cause, —  
 To grace the gentry of a land remote,  
 And follow unacquainted colours here ?  
 What, here ? O nation, that thou couldst remove !  
 That Neptune's arms, who clippeth thee about,  
 Would bear thee from the knowledge of thyself,  
 And grapple thee unto a pagan shore ;  
 Where these two Christian armies might combine  
 The blood of malice in a vein of league,  
 And not to spend it so unneighbourly !

19 *Cries out upon*] Exclaims against.

27 *a stranger*] a foreigner. The punctuation of the Folios, which is followed here, is often needlessly changed.

30 *Upon . . . cause*] Over the disgrace of this compulsory course (of action). Cf. "compulsion," line 44, *infra*.

34 *clippeth*] embraceth.

36 *grapple*] Pope's emendation of the Folios' reading *cripple*.

38 *in a vein of league*] into a vein of friendship.

39 *to spend*] "to" is grammatically superfluous. Steevens doubtfully proposed to hyphen it with spend (*i. e.*, to-spend), thus giving the verb an intensitive force.

LEW. A noble temper dost thou show in this; 40  
 And great affections wrestling in thy bosom  
 Doth make an earthquake of nobility.  
 O, what a noble combat hast thou fought  
 Between compulsion and a brave respect!  
 Let me wipe off this honourable dew,  
 That silverly doth progress on thy cheeks:  
 My heart hath melted at a lady's tears,  
 Being an ordinary inundation;  
 But this effusion of such manly drops,  
 This shower, blown up by tempest of the soul, 50  
 Startles mine eyes, and makes me more amazed  
 Than had I seen the vaulty top of heaven  
 Figured quite o'er with burning meteors.  
 Lift up thy brow, renowned Salisbury,  
 And with a great heart heave away this storm:  
 Commend these waters to those baby eyes  
 That never saw the giant world enraged;  
 Nor met with fortune other than at feasts,  
 Full of warm blood, of mirth, of gossiping.  
 Come, come; for thou shalt thrust thy hand as deep 60  
 Into the purse of rich prosperity  
 As Lewis himself: so, nobles, shall you all,

44 *compulsion*] Cf. line 30, *supra*: "this enforced cause."  
*a brave respect*] considerations of honour and manliness.

46 *doth progress*] doth (make its) progress.

52 *vaulty top*] vaulted, vault-like roof. The sky is conventionally credited  
 with a vaulted roof by Shakespeare and the poets of his own and  
 later times.

59 *Full of warm blood*] The Folios read *Full warm of blood*. The  
 transposition of the present text is not essential.  
*gossiping*] merry, easy talk.

That knit your sinews to the strength of mine.  
And even there, methinks, an angel spake:

*Enter PANDULPH*

Look, where the holy legate comes apace,  
To give us warrant from the hand of heaven,  
And on our actions set the name of right  
With holy breath.

PAND. Hail, noble prince of France!  
The next is this, King John hath reconciled  
Himself to Rome; his spirit is come in, 70  
That so stood out against the holy church,  
The great metropolis and see of Rome:  
Therefore thy threatening colours now wind up;  
And tame the savage spirit of wild war,  
That, like a lion foster'd up at hand,  
It may lie gently at the foot of peace,  
And be no further harmful than in show.

LEW. Your grace shall pardon me, I will not back:  
I am too high-born to be propertied,

64 *even there . . . an angel spake*] A colloquialism expressive here of slyly ironical corroboration. Possibly a quibble is intended on the alleged mercenary motives of the speaker's English allies. The arrogant Dauphin has already spoken of "the *purse* of rich prosperity," and addressed Salisbury and his friends as "nobles" (the name of a familiar gold coin). "Angel," which is the name of another gold coin, may carry on the mercenary insinuation. For the punning collocation of "noble" and "angel" see *Much Ado*, II, iii, 29.

Pandulph's convenient entry takes off the edge of the covert insult.

75 *foster'd up at hand*] brought up by hand, reared by human care.

79 *to be propertied*] to be treated like a contemptible theatrical property. Cf. *Tw. Night*, IV, 2, 88: "They have here *propertied* me."

To be a secondary at control, 80  
 Or useful serving-man and instrument  
 To any sovereign state throughout the world.  
 Your breath first kindled the dead coal of wars  
 Between this chastised kingdom and myself,  
 And brought in matter that should feed this fire;  
 And now 't is far too huge to be blown out  
 With that same weak wind which enkindled it.  
 You taught me how to know the face of right,  
 Acquainted me with interest to this land,  
 Yea, thrust this enterprise into my heart; 90  
 And come ye now to tell me John hath made  
 His peace with Rome? What is that peace to me?  
 I, by the honour of my marriage-bed,  
 After young Arthur, claim this land for mine;  
 And, now it is half-conquer'd, must I back  
 Because that John hath made his peace with Rome?  
 Am I Rome's slave? What penny hath Rome borne,  
 What men provided, what munition sent,  
 To underprop this action? Is 't not I  
 That undergo this charge? who else but I, 100  
 And such as to my claim are liable,  
 Sweat in this business and maintain this war?  
 Have I not heard these islanders shout out  
 "Vive le roi!" as I have bank'd their towns?  
 Have I not here the best cards for the game,  
 To win this easy match play'd for a crown?

80 *a secondary at control*] a subordinate under control.

89 *interest*] the claim I possess. Cf. line 165, *infra*.

104 *bank'd their towns*] passed along the river-banks about their towns.

"Coasted" is similarly used of vessels at sea.

And shall I now give o'er the yielded set?  
 No, no, on my soul, it never shall be said.

PAND. You look but on the outside of this work.

LEW. Outside or inside, I will not return 110  
 Till my attempt so much be glorified  
 As to my ample hope was promised  
 Before I drew this gallant head of war,  
 And cull'd these fiery spirits from the world,  
 To outlook conquest and to win renown  
 Even in the jaws of danger and of death.

[*Trumpet sounds.*]

What lusty trumpet thus doth summon us?

*Enter the BASTARD, attended*

BAST. According to the fair-play of the world,  
 Let me have audience; I am sent to speak:  
 My holy lord of Milan, from the king 120  
 I come, to learn how you have dealt for him;  
 And, as you answer, I do know the scope  
 And warrant limited unto my tongue.

107 *set*] bout (of a game).

113 *drew this gallant head of war*] levied this gallant fighting force.

"Drawn" is similarly used, IV, ii, 118, *supra*. Cf. 1 *Hen. IV*, I, iii, 284: "by raising of a head" (*i. e.*, army).

115 *To outlook conquest*] To conquer by facing down, intimidating, over-aweing (resistance). "Outlook" has much the force of "out-face" in II, i, 97, *supra*: "*out-faced* infant state."

118 *the fair-play of the world*] the principles of fair-play recognized by the world.

121 *dealt*] negotiated, acted.

123 *limited*] set as limit, appointed.

PAND. The Dauphin is too wilful-opposite,  
And will not temporize with my entreaties;  
He flatly says he'll not lay down his arms.

BAST. By all the blood that ever fury breathed,  
The youth says well. Now hear our English king;  
For thus his royalty doth speak in me.  
He is prepared, and reason too he should: 130  
This apish and unmannerly approach,  
This harness'd masque and unadvised revel,  
This unhair'd sauciness and boyish troops,  
The king doth smile at; and is well prepared  
To whip this dwarfish war, these pigmy arms,  
From out the circle of his territories.  
That hand which had the strength, even at your door,  
To cudgel you and make you take the hatch,  
To dive like buckets in concealed wells,  
To crouch in litter of your stable planks, 140  
To lie like pawns lock'd up in chests and trunks,  
To hug with swine, to seek sweet safety out  
In vaults and prisons, and to thrill and shake

124 *wilful-opposite*] wrongheaded. The hyphen is due to Theobald.

132 *harness'd masque*] masque in armour.

*unadvised*] rash, irresponsible. Cf. II, i, 45 and 191, *supra*.

133 *unhair'd*] beardless: Theobald's brilliant emendation of the meaningless Folio reading *unheard*. At V, i, 69-70, *supra*, the Dauphin is similarly denounced as "a beardless boy, A cocker'd silken wanton." Cf. *Macb.*, V, ii, 10-11: "And many *unrough* youths that even now Protest their first of manhood."

138 *take the hatch*] take your departure by leaping the halfdoor, hurry off, take a hurried leap. Cf. "o'er the hatch," I, 171, *supra*.

140 *in litter . . . planks*] amid the litter of your stable-floors.

141 *pawns*] pledges in a pawnshop.

Even at the crying of your nation's crow,  
Thinking his voice an armed Englishman;  
Shall that victorious hand be feeble here,  
That in your chambers gave you chastisement?

No: know the gallant monarch is in arms  
And like an eagle o'er his airy towers,  
To souse annoyance that comes near his nest. 150  
And you degenerate, you ingrate revolts,  
You bloody Neroes, ripping up the womb  
Of your dear mother England, blush for shame;  
For your own ladies and pale-visaged maids  
Like Amazons come tripping after drums,  
Their thimbles into armed gauntlets change,  
Their needles to lances, and their gentle hearts  
To fierce and bloody inclination.

LEW. There end thy brave, and turn thy face in  
peace;

We grant thou canst outscold us: fare thee well; 160  
We hold our time too precious to be spent  
With such a brabbler.

PAND. Give me leave to speak.

BAST. No, I will speak.

LEW. We will attend to neither.

144 *your nation's crow*] the crowing cock is the French national bird.

146 *feeble*] enfeebled.

149 *o'er his airy towers*] soars or towers over the brood in his nest.

150 *souse*] pounce on.

151 *revolts*] men in revolt, deserters. Cf. V, iv, 7, *infra*.

156 *armed*] plated with steel.

159 *brave*] bravado, boasting.

162 *brabbler*] brawler.

Strike up the drums; and let the tongue of war  
Plead for our interest and our being here.

BAST. Indeed, your drums, being beaten, will cry out;  
And so shall you, being beaten: do but start  
An echo with the clamour of thy drum,  
And even at hand a drum is ready braced  
That shall reverberate all as loud as thine; 170  
Sound but another, and another shall  
As loud as thine rattle the welkin's ear  
And mock the deep-mouth'd thunder: for at hand,  
Not trusting to this halting legate here,  
Whom he hath used rather for sport than need,  
Is warlike John; and in his forehead sits  
A bare-ribb'd death, whose office is this day  
To feast upon whole thousands of the French.

LEW. Strike up our drums, to find this danger out.

BAST. And thou shalt find it, Dauphin, do not doubt. 180  
[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III—THE FIELD OF BATTLE

*Alarums. Enter KING JOHN and HUBERT*

K. JOHN. How goes the day with us? O, tell me,  
Hubert.

HUB. Badly, I fear. How fares your majesty?

K. JOHN. This fever, that hath troubled me so long,  
Lies heavy on me; O, my heart is sick!

165 *interest*] claim. Cf. line 89, *supra*.

172 *rattle the welkin's ear*] rattle in the ear of heaven.

173 *deep-mouth'd*] deep-voiced.

177 *A bare-ribb'd death*] A skeleton. Cf. *Lucrece*, 1761: "a bare-bon'd death."



*Enter a Messenger*

MESS. My lord, your valiant kinsman, Faulconbridge, Desires your majesty to leave the field And send him word by me which way you go.

K. JOHN. Tell him, toward Swinstead, to the abbey there.

MESS. Be of good comfort; for the great supply That was expected by the Dauphin here, 10  
Are wreck'd three nights ago on Goodwin Sands.  
This news was brought to Richard but even now:  
The French fight coldly, and retire themselves.

K. JOHN. Ay me! this tyrant fever burns me up,  
And will not let me welcome this good news.  
Set on towards Swinstead: to my litter straight;  
Weakness possesseth me, and I am faint. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV — ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

*Enter SALISBURY, PEMBROKE, and BIGOT*

SAL. I did not think the king so stored with friends.

PEM. Up once again; put spirit in the French:  
If they miscarry, we miscarry too.

---

9 *supply*] reinforcement; a noun of multitude. The verb in accord is in the singular in the next line, and in the plural in the next line but one.

12 *Richard*] the Bastard. Cf. I, i, 162, *supra*.

13 *retire themselves*] withdraw themselves, retreat.

16 *Swinstead*] Swineshead, near Spalding in Lincolnshire.

SAL. That misbegotten devil, Faulconbridge,  
In spite of spite, alone upholds the day.

PEM. They say King John sore sick hath left the field.

*Enter MELUN, wounded.*

MEL. Lead me to the revolts of England here.

SAL. When we were happy we had other names.

PEM. It is the Count Melun.

SAL. Wounded to death.

MEL. Fly, noble English, you are bought and sold; 10  
Unthread the rude eye of rebellion  
And welcome home again discarded faith.  
Seek out King John and fall before his feet;  
For if the French be lords of this loud day,  
He means to recompense the pains you take  
By cutting off your heads: thus hath he sworn  
And I with him, and many moe with me,  
Upon the altar at Saint Edmundsbury;  
Even on that altar where we swore to you  
Dear amity and everlasting love. 20

SAL. May this be possible? may this be true?

MEL. Have I not hideous death within my view,  
Retaining but a quantity of life,

5 *In spite of spite*] Despite all disaster. Cf. 3 *Hen. VI*, II, iii, 5.

7 *revolts*] men in revolt, deserters. Cf. V, ii, 151, *supra*.

10 *bought and sold*] tricked, befooled, betrayed.

11 *Unthread the rude eye*] Undo the evil, redress the wrong. The metaphor, of course, refers to the eye of a needle.

14 *loud*] boisterous, stormy.

15 *He*] i. e., The Dauphin.

17 *moe*] an old form of "more."

23 *quantity*] small quantity, modicum.

Which bleeds away, even as a form of wax  
 Resolveth from his figure 'gainst the fire?  
 What in the world should make me now deceive,  
 Since I must lose the use of all deceit?  
 Why should I then be false, since it is true  
 That I must die here and live hence by truth?  
 I say again, if Lewis do win the day, 30  
 He is forsworn, if e'er those eyes of yours  
 Behold another day break in the east:  
 But even this night, whose black contagious breath  
 Already smokes about the burning crest  
 Of the old, feeble and day-wearied sun,  
 Even this ill night, your breathing shall expire,  
 Paying the fine of rated treachery  
 Even with a treacherous fine of all your lives,  
 If Lewis by your assistance win the day.  
 Commend me to one Hubert with your king: 40  
 The love of him, and this respect besides,  
 For that my grandsire was an Englishman.  
 Awakes my conscience to confess all this.

24 *a form of wax*] a model or effigy of wax. Witches were credited with the practice of modelling a waxen figure of one whom they destined for destruction, and of causing the life to ebb as they melted the wax effigy before a fire.

25 *Resolveth from*] Dissolveth, melteth. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, ii, 129-130: "O, that this too too solid flesh would melt, Thaw and *resolve* itself into a dew!"

29 *hence*] in heaven.

37 *rated treachery*] treachery which has been duly appraised or assessed, to which a fixed penalty or fine has been allotted.

41 *respect*] consideration.

In lieu whereof, I pray you, bear me hence  
 From forth the noise and rumour of the field,  
 Where I may think the remnant of my thoughts  
 In peace, and part this body and my soul  
 With contemplation and devout desires.

SAL. We do believe thee: and beshrew my soul  
 But I do love the favour and the form 50  
 Of this most fair occasion, by the which  
 We will untread the steps of damned flight,  
 And like a bated and retired flood,  
 Leaving our rankness and irregular course,  
 Stoop low within those bounds we have o'erlook'd,  
 And calmly run on in obedience  
 Even to our ocean, to our great King John.  
 My arm shall give thee help to bear thee hence;  
 For I do see the cruel pangs of death  
 Right in thine eye. Away, my friends! New flight; 60  
 And happy newness, that intends old right.

[*Exeunt, leading off Melun.*]

---

44 *In lieu whereof*] In return for which.

45 *rumour*] commotion, roar.

50 *favour*] aspect.

53 *bated*] diminished, baffled.

54 *rankness*] exuberance, overflow. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 71-72: "Rain added to a river that is *rank*, Perforce will force it overflow the bank."

55 *Stoop low . . . o'erlook'd*] Cf. III, i, 23, *supra*: "Like a proud river *peering o'er his bounds*."

61 *intends old right*] aims at establishing old right.

## SCENE V — THE FRENCH CAMP

*Enter LEWIS and his train*

LEW. The sun of heaven methought was loath to set,  
But stay'd, and made the western welkin blush,  
When English measure backward their own ground  
In faint retire. O, bravely came we off,  
When with a volley of our needless shot,  
After such bloody toil, we bid good night;  
And wound our tottering colours clearly up,  
Last in the field, and almost lords of it!

*Enter a Messenger*

MESS. Where is my prince, the Dauphin?

LEW. Here: what news?

MESS. The Count Melun is slain; the English lords 10  
By his persuasion are again fall'n off,  
And your supply, which you have wish'd so long,  
Are cast away and sunk on Goodwin Sands.

4 *came we off*] we escaped.

7 *And wound . . . clearly up*] And completely furled our flags, which hung or waved limply (after the severe action of the day). *Tottering*, which is the intelligible reading of the Folios, has been needlessly changed to *tatter'd* by Pope and to *tattering* by Malone. "Tottered" is a common Elizabethan variant of "tattered," but no instance is accessible of "tottering" being used for "tattering" (as Malone suggests) in the sense of "hanging in tatters."

11 *fall'n off*] revolted. Cf. III, i, 127, *supra*: "*fall* over to my foes," and *ib.* 320, "*will fall* from thee."

LEW. Ah, foul shrewd news ! beshrew thy very heart !  
I did not think to be so sad to-night  
As this hath made me. Who was he that said  
King John did fly an hour or two before  
The stumbling night did part our weary powers ?

MESS. Whoever spoke it, it is true, my lord.

LEW. Well ; keep good quarter and good care to-night :  
The day shall not be up so soon as I,  
To try the fair adventure of to-morrow. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI—AN OPEN PLACE IN THE NEIGHBOUR-  
HOOD OF SWINSTEAD ABBEY

*Enter the BASTARD and HUBERT, severally*

HUB. Who's there ? speak, ho ! speak quickly, or I  
shoot.

BAST. A friend. What art thou ?

HUB. Of the part of England.

BAST. Whither dost thou go ?

HUB. What's that to thee ? why may not I demand  
Of thine affairs, as well as thou of mine ?

BAST. Hubert, I think.

HUB. Thou hast a perfect thought :  
I will upon all hazards well believe

14 *shrewd* . . . *beshrew*] bitter or cursed . . . curse.

18 *stumbling night*] night which causes stumbling.

20 *good quarter*] strict guard.

3 *Of the part*] On the side.

Thou art my friend, that know'st my tongue so well.  
Who art thou?

BAST. Who thou wilt: and if thou please,  
Thou mayst befriend me so much as to think 10  
I come one way of the Plantagenets.

HUB. Unkind remembrance! thou and eyeless night  
Have done me shame: brave soldier, pardon me,  
That any accent breaking from thy tongue  
Should 'scape the true acquaintance of mine ear.

BAST. Come, come; sans compliment, what news  
abroad?

HUB. Why, here walk I in the black brow of night,  
To find you out.

BAST. Brief, then; and what's the news?

HUB. O, my sweet sir, news fitting to the night,  
Black, fearful, comfortless and horrible. 20

BAST. Show me the very wound of this ill news:  
I am no woman, I'll not swoon at it.

HUB. The king, I fear, is poison'd by a monk:  
I left him almost speechless; and broke out  
To acquaint you with this evil, that you might  
The better arm you to the sudden time,  
Than if you had at leisure known of this.

BAST. How did he take it? who did taste to him?

HUB. A monk, I tell you; a resolved villain,

---

12 *eyeless*] blind, dark: Theobald's emendation of the Folio reading *endless*. Cf. *Lucrece*, 1013: "*sightless* night."

26 *to the sudden time*] to meet the emergency at once.

28 *taste*] test the purity of the food by tasting. A "sewer" (*i. e.*, taster) was an important officer of the king's household.

29 *resolved*] resolute, determined.

Whose bowels suddenly burst out: the king 30  
Yet speaks and peradventure may recover.

BAST. Who didst thou leave to tend his majesty?

HUB. Why, know you not? the lords are all come  
back,

And brought Prince Henry in their company;  
At whose request the king hath pardon'd them,  
And they are all about his majesty.

BAST. Withhold thine indignation, mighty heaven,  
And tempt us not to bear above our power!

I'll tell thee, Hubert, half my power this night,  
Passing these flats, are taken by the tide; 40

These Lincoln Washes have devoured them;  
Myself, well mounted, hardly have escaped.

Away before: conduct me to the king;

I doubt he will be dead or ere I come. [Exeunt.]

## SCENE VII—THE ORCHARD AT SWINSTEAD ABBEY

*Enter PRINCE HENRY, SALISBURY, and BIGOT*

P. HEN. It is too late: the life of all his blood  
Is touch'd corruptibly, and his pure brain,  
Which some suppose the soul's frail dwelling-house,  
Doth by the idle comments that it makes  
Foretell the ending of mortality.

---

44 *doubt*] fear. Cf. *supra*, IV, i, 19, and IV, ii, 102, *supra*.

2 *corruptibly*] so as to cause corruption; malignantly (in the medical sense).



*Enter PEMBROKE*

PEM. His highness yet doth speak, and holds belief  
That, being brought into the open air,  
It would allay the burning quality  
Of that fell poison which assaileth him.

P. HEN. Let him be brought into the orchard here.  
Doth he still rage? *[Exit Bigot.]*

PEM. He is more patient 11  
Than when you left him; even now he sung.

P. HEN. O vanity of sickness! fierce extremes  
In their continuance will not feel themselves.  
Death, having prey'd upon the outward parts,  
Leaves them invisible, and his siege is now  
Against the mind, the which he pricks and wounds  
With many legions of strange fantasies,  
Which, in their throng and press to that last hold,  
Confound themselves. 'Tis strange that death should  
sing. 20

I am the cygnet to this pale faint swan,

13-14 *fierce extremes . . . feel themselves*] the worst pangs of illness,  
when they persist, cease to give the sensation of bodily suffering;  
they tend to render the mere flesh unconscious, insensible.

16 *Leaves them invisible*] Thus the Folio reading, which is not easy to  
interpret. "Invisible" may, however, be used adverbially in the  
sense of "imperceptibly." But Hanmer's suggested change of *in-*  
*sensible* for *invisible* improves the general significance of the passage,  
which implies that Death, having worked its evil will on the bodily  
organs, passes from them to besiege or attack the mind.

19 *in their throng . . . hold*] in their tumult and hurry to reach the  
last tenable part of the dying man.

Who chants a doleful hymn to his own death,  
And from the organ-pipe of frailty sings  
His soul and body to their lasting rest.

SAL. Be of good comfort, prince; for you are born  
To set a form upon that indigest  
Which he hath left so shapeless and so rude.

*Enter Attendants, and BIGOT, carrying KING JOHN in a chair*

K. JOHN. Ay, marry, now my soul hath elbow-room;  
It would not out at windows nor at doors.

There is so hot a summer in my bosom, 30  
That all my bowels crumble up to dust:  
I am a scribbled form, drawn with a pen  
Upon a parchment, and against this fire  
Do I shrink up.

P. HEN. How fares your majesty?

K. JOHN. Poison'd, — ill fare — dead, forsook, cast  
off:

And none of you will bid the winter come  
To thrust his icy fingers in my maw,  
Nor let my kingdom's rivers take their course  
Through my burn'd bosom, nor entreat the north 40  
To make his bleak winds kiss my parched lips  
And comfort me with cold. I do not ask you much,  
I beg cold comfort; and you are so strait  
And so ingrateful, you deny me that.

P. HEN. O that there were some virtue in my tears,  
That might relieve you!

26 *indigest*] crude chaotic mass.

42 *strait*] niggardly.

# KING JOHN

ACT V

K. JOHN.                      The salt in them is hot.  
Within me is a hell; and there the poison  
Is as a fiend confined to tyrannize  
On unreprieveable condemned blood.

*Enter the BASTARD*

BAST. O, I am scalded with my violent motion,  
And spleen of speed to see your majesty ! 50

K. JOHN. O cousin, thou art come to set mine eye :  
The tackle of my heart 'is crack'd and burn'd,  
And all the shrouds wherewith my life should sail  
Are turned to one thread, one little hair :  
My heart hath one poor string to stay it by,  
Which holds but till thy news be uttered ;  
And then all this thou seest is but a clod  
And module of confounded royalty.

BAST. The Dauphin is preparing hitherward,  
Where heaven He knows how we shall answer him ; 60  
For in a night the best part of my power,  
As I upon advantage did remove,  
Were in the Washes all unwarily  
Devoured by the unexpected flood.                      [*The king dies.*]

SAL. You breathe these dead news in as dead an  
ear.  
My liege ! my lord ! but now a king, now thus.

58 *module of confounded royalty*] mould of ruined royalty. Cf. *All's*  
*Well*, IV, iii, 94.

60 *answer him*] meet his attack.

62 *upon advantage did remove*] moved the troops on the occurrence of  
(what seemed to be) a favourable opportunity.

P. HEN. Even so must I run on, and even so stop.  
What surety of the world, what hope, what stay,  
When this was now a king, and now is clay?

BAST. Art thou gone so? I do but stay behind 70  
To do the office for thee of revenge,  
And then my soul shall wait on thee to heaven,  
As it on earth hath been thy servant still.  
Now, now, you stars that move in your right spheres,  
Where be your powers? show now your mended faiths,  
And instantly return with me again,  
To push destruction and perpetual shame  
Out of the weak door of our fainting land.  
Straight let us seek, or straight we shall be sought;  
The Dauphin rages at our very heels. 80

SAL. It seems you know not, then, so much as we:  
The Cardinal Pandulph is within at rest,  
Who half an hour since came from the Dauphin,  
And brings from him such offers of our peace  
As we with honour and respect may take,  
With purpose presently to leave this war.

BAST. He will the rather do it when he sees  
Ourselves well sinewed to our defence.

SAL. Nay, it is in a manner done already;  
For many carriages he hath dispatch'd 90  
To the sea-side, and put his cause and quarrel  
To the disposing of the cardinal:  
With whom yourself, myself and other lords,

82 *The Cardinal Pandulph . . . at rest*] As a matter of history,  
Pandulph had lately been succeeded as legate by Gualo, who  
finally negotiated peace.

If you think meet, this afternoon will post  
To consummate this business happily.

BAST. Let it be so: and you, my noble prince,  
With other princes that may best be spared,  
Shall wait upon your father's funeral.

P. HEN. At Worcester must his body be interr'd;  
For so he will'd it.

BAST. Thither shall it then: 100  
And happily may your sweet self put on  
The lineal state and glory of the land!  
To whom, with all submission, on my knee  
I do bequeath my faithful services  
And true subjection everlastingly.

SAL. And the like tender of our love we make,  
To rest without a spot for evermore.

P. HEN. I have a kind soul that would give you  
thanks

And knows not how to do it but with tears.

BAST. O, let us pay the time but needful woe, 110  
Since it hath been beforehand with our griefs.  
This England never did, nor never shall,  
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,  
But when it first did help to wound itself.

97 *princes*] possibly an accidental error for *nobles*. The word seems  
wrongly repeated from the line before.

104 *bequeath*] transfer.

108 *give you thanks*] The Folios omit *you*, which Rowe inserted to  
complete the metre.

110-111 *O, let us pay . . . griefs*] O, let us pay the events no more  
than the essential due of mourning, since time has prefaced the  
catastrophe with afflictions enough.

Now these her princes are come home again,  
Come the three corners of the world in arms,  
And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,  
If England to itself do rest but true. [*Exeunt.*]

116 *three corners of the world*] Cf. *Ant. and Cleop.*, IV, vi, 6: “the three-nook’d world.” The reference is apparently to the three known continents — Europe, Africa, and Asia.











KING HENRY IV

PART I

FRED ROF

***P*** **PRINCE HENRY.** “*Your money !*”  
**POINS.** “*Villains !*”

ACT II, SCENE II, *line* 98.

# **KING HENRY IV—PART I**

**WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY AUGUSTINE BIRRELL  
AND AN ORIGINAL FRONTISPIECE BY FRED ROE**



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION TO KING HENRY IV, PART I, BY AUGUSTINE BIRRELL . . . . .	ix
TEXT OF THE PLAY . . . . .	1





## INTRODUCTION



ONE of Shakespeare's plays are more read than the 'First and Second Parts of Henry the Fourth.' Perhaps no Author has ever in two plays afforded so much delight. The great events are interesting, for the fate of kingdoms depend upon them; the slighter occurrences are diverting, and except one or two sufficiently probable; the incidents are multiplied with wonderful fertility of invention, and the characters are diversified with the utmost nicety of discernment and the profoundest skill in the nature of man."

Thus far, Dr. Johnson, the most sensible though not the most painstaking of the old-fashioned Shakespearean commentators. The criticism, such as it is, covers the ground, though it does not essay to dig deeply into it.



## FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

What was doubtless true in 1764 probably remains true in 1904, "None of Shakespeare's plays are more read than the 'First and Second Parts of Henry the Fourth.'" We still retain as a people enough of our feelings and our character to relish the histories of our country as narrated to us by Shakespeare, but we need to be reminded by Landor<sup>1</sup> that it is only a people who do retain their feelings and their character that can relish Shakespeare's historical dramas in perfection. "Perhaps no Author has ever in two plays afforded so much delight." "By the Lord, thou sayest true, lad." Whatever else may be questionable, so much at least is certain. But who is the great breeder of this delight, the father of this infinite merriment? Wherein do we rejoice greatly? It is not when we read of the "sad bloody hour" spent at Holmedon, nor of the day of Shrewsbury fight when the South Wind, by "his hollow whispering in the leaves," foretold the tempest. The "great events" may be interesting, having dependent upon them "the fate of kingdoms"; but these are not the things that have made these two plays the very lodestars of humour, wit, and social eloquence. Of course they are not. The thing that has done this is as plain as the road between London and St. Albans. There are, it may be, secrets still hidden in the plays of Shakespeare as there are said to be in Holy Writ, but the fat knight is not one of them. No need to drag him from behind the arras, where he lies fast asleep, snorting like a horse. We all have known him, have delighted in him — have even loved him, the scandalous old man,

<sup>1</sup> "Imaginary Conversations," "Milton and Andrew Marvell."

## INTRODUCTION

from the days of our most innocent youth till now when, like him, we are old — “the more’s the pity.”

From the supreme moment, one of the greatest in the history of the English mind, when the second scene of the First Act of the “First Part of Henry the Fourth” first opened and disclosed to the eyes of a London audience “a room in the King’s palace,” “Enter Henry, Prince of Wales and Falstaff,” it has been found in vain to contend with this “power behind the throne,” or to dispute the dominancy over both mind and imagination of this wicked old man. As it was in 1598, so it is to-day. The world has grown bigger and older — but it matters not. However big the world may be, Falstaff’s wit can overflow it, and however old it may grow, Sir John himself, though “blasted with antiquity,” is still young.

“Well, I cannot last ever, but it was always yet the trick of our English nation, if they have a good thing, to make it too common. If you will needs say I am an old man, you should give me rest. I would to God my name were not so terrible to the enemy as it is. I were better to be eaten to death with rust than to be scoured to nothing with perpetual motion.”

Some good things cannot be made too common, though we have still the trick Sir John complained of, and Falstaff’s wit is as fresh as ever. There can be no rest for him — he must go on making men laugh till the last syllable of recorded time. “Why, Hal, ’t is my vocation, Hal ; ’t is no sin for a man to labour in his vocation.”

Literature is full of paradoxes. Falstaff (as is indeed

## FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

befitting) is the biggest of them. Never was Author less of an Author than Shakespeare, the greatest of Authors. Although he has peopled a whole world for us, and created more characters than any other, he never, as Hazlitt well said, "committed himself" to any of them. He does not fall in love with his own creatures, after a lamentably prevalent fashion, and keep sticking in a word here and a word there in order to misdirect the reader's judgment, and secure a verdict against the evidence. Shakespeare was incapable of such egotistical folly. He has no prejudices — Hazlitt once more — "for or against his characters." There they are — you may listen to them, see what they do, and hear what others who knew them say about them. He lets you off nothing, and extenuates naught. If you love Falstaff, and are angry with the old lord of the Council who rated him in the street, or with the Lord Chief Justice who sent him to the Fleet Prison, and, most of all, with his sweet Hal, "King Hal — my royal Hal," for cutting him so severely in a public place near Westminster Abbey, you have only yourself to blame; and if you should ever repent (which is most unlikely), you cannot call Shakespeare "the villainous abominable misleader" of your youth, for has he not put those very words in Prince Henry's mouth and applied them to "that old white-bearded Satan," Falstaff himself?

The paradox is this — how comes it about that the character of Falstaff is even tolerable to us? "Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it? wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it? wherein

## INTRODUCTION

cunning, but in craft? wherein crafty, but in villainy? wherein villainous, but in all things? wherein worthy, but in nothing?" Which of us will undertake to answer this catechism? "But, sirrah, there is no room for faith, truth, nor honesty in this bosom of thine." Can any one of us reply there was? No generous action or thought is ever attributed to Falstaff from first to last. He wins affection, it is true, but Shakespeare, at all events, gives us no hint that he ever showed any. His corruption was as deep as the pit of hell, and his heartlessness is displayed with a hand that never flinches. Falstaff's recruiting is hardly a merry tale.

*Prince.* But tell me, Jack, whose fellows are these that come after?

*Fal.* Mine, Hal, mine.

*Prince.* I did never see such pitiful rascals.

*Fal.* Tut, tut! good enough to toss; food for powder, food for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better: tush, man, mortal men, mortal men."

The poor devils met their fate in the fight near Shrewsbury.

*Fal.* I have led my ragamuffins where they are peppered: there's not three of my hundred and fifty left alive; and they are for the town's end, to beg during life."

The incident of the boy the Prince gave Falstaff is a fine example of the method of Shakespeare's stern judgment upon men's cruelty and indifference. What a mercy it is no one can cast it in Shakespeare's teeth that he was a Puritan or had a conscience of any particular brand!

## FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

*“ Poins. Look, look, here comes Bardolph.*

*Prince. And the boy that I gave Falstaff: he had him from me Christian; and see if the fat villain have not transformed him ape.*

*Enter BARDOLPH and Page.*

*Bard. 'Save your grace.*

*Prince. And yours, most noble Bardolph.*

*Bard. [to the page]. Come, you pernicious ass, you bashful fool, must you be blushing? wherefore blush you now? What a maid-only man-at-arms are you become! Is it such a matter to get a pottle-pot's maidenhead?*

*Page. He called me, even now, my lord, through a red lattice, and I could discern no part of his face from the window: at last I spied his eyes, and methought he had made two holes in the ale-wife's new petticoat, and peeped through.”*

Here we have this unfortunate boy trying his 'prentice hand upon that well-worn jest in the infamous company he was now keeping, Bardolph's red face. He labours the thing just as a boy would, and is too obviously doing his best.

*“ Prince. Hath not the boy profited?*

*Bard. [to the page]. Away, you whoreson upright rabbit, away!*

*Page. Away, you rascally Althea's dream, away!*

*Prince. Instruct us, boy; what dream, boy?*

*Page. Marry, my lord, Althea dreamed she was delivered of a fire-brand; and therefore I call him her dream.*

*Prince. A crown's worth of good interpretation. There it is, boy.* *[Gives him money.]*

*Poins. Oh, that this good blossom could be kept from cankers! Well, there is sixpence to preserve thee.*

*Bard. If you do not make him be hanged among you, the gallows shall be wronged.”*

## INTRODUCTION

The boy was reserved for a better fate than Bardolph predicted: he was killed at Agincourt by some French runaways, "expressly against the law of arms"; but none the less it was a bad jest for him when the "mad Prince" gave him to Falstaff.

The question whether Sir John was a coward in grain or only in instinct is hardly worth debating, since the presence of physical courage in such a character as his would lend it nothing of attractiveness. The hacking of his sword after the Gadshill affair is a thing hard to disguise in humour, whilst the stabbing in the thigh of the dead Hotspur—"Therefore, sirrah [*stabbing him*], with a new wound in your thigh, come you along with me [*takes Hotspur on his back*]"—is as blackguardly an action as was ever recorded in the annals of shame. His lies—we know what they were! "like the father that begets them, gross as a mountain, open, palpable." As for his speech—who dare make a collection of his base comparisons, his unsavoury similes? No one but an eighteenth-century commentator would ever think of seeking to unravel the hidden meanings and vile allusions of his vocabulary. Falstaff's "Kiss me, Doll," followed by his cry "I am old, I am old," together with other touches in the same scene, might well stand for the last words of disgust and horror. Then we call to mind his deathbed, crying out "God, God, God" three or four times, with Mistress Quickly by his side to give him ghostly comfort: "a' should not think of God; I hoped there was no need to trouble himself with any such thoughts yet." Other details are supplied us, but there is no need to mention

## FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

what no one can forget, — Shakespeare cannot be accused of handling Falstaff tenderly as if he loved him.

We are not a nation of moralists. Hypocrisy is our besetting sin. What, I wonder, would Pascal have had to say about Falstaff? He was severe with Montaigne: “*Il est plien de mots sales et déshonnêtes.*” But we have no Pascals. Johnson, who is our great moralist, is but half-hearted in his censure, which reads like the language addressed by a judge who is himself a free-liver to an unlucky prisoner — something, that is, that has to be said. The good doctor is annoyed with the Chief Justice for sending Sir John to prison at the end of the First Part. He is quite disposed to sue out a *Habeas Corpus*. “I do not see why Falstaff is carried to the Fleet. We have never lost sight of him since his dismissal from the King: he has committed no new fault and therefore incurred no punishment.” And in another place Johnson bids us remember that Falstaff’s character is “stained with no enormous or sanguinary crimes, so that his licentiousness is not so offensive but that it may be borne for his mirth.” On the whole, I am inclined to call this the “backing of your friends.”

Foreign judgment is harsher, and Victor Hugo dubs Sir John *centaure du porc*, “Swine Centaur,” and thereby for once exposed himself to meet the brunt of Mr. Swinburne’s spear. Mr. Swinburne will not hear of so base a comparison, and seeks to pull Falstaff out of the sty, albeit the glorified sty, of a *centaure du porc*, by dwelling upon the words of Mistress Quickly in “King Henry V”: “By my troth, he will yield the crow a pudding one of

## INTRODUCTION

these days — *the King has killed his heart!*” Here, exclaims Mr. Swinburne, with generous effusiveness, “here is the point in Falstaff so strangely overlooked by the man of all men who we should have said must be the first to seize and to appreciate it. It is as grievous as it is inexplicable that the Shakespeare of France — the most infinite in compassion, ‘in conscience and tender heart’ of all great poets and all nations of the world — should have missed the deep tenderness of this supreme and subtlest touch in the work of the greatest among his fellows.” In a word or two, we are asked to believe that Falstaff so loved Prince Hal that when dismissed his presence, he died of a broken heart; and the wonder is Victor Hugo did not see it all plainly revealed in half a line of Dame Quickly’s. Shakespeare uses the word “heart” more than sixty times in the two parts of “King Henry IV” and “King Henry V,” and in many different senses. “Well, I’ll repent, and that suddenly,” says Falstaff in the First Part, “while I am in some liking. I shall be out of heart shortly and then I shall have no strength to repent.” In this context “heart” must mean *breath*, and in Dame Quickly’s lips it probably meant *courage* or *spirits*. Valiant as is Mr. Swinburne’s effort, I doubt whether it has convinced anybody. Falstaff was too intellectual a being, too supreme a wit, too lively an intelligence, to be so overdone with love for one, who beside him was but a raw boy, as to die of wounded affection. Whatever else “plump Jack” was, he was not a sentimentalist.

But the paradox remains. It survives the most mi-



## FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

nute study of the text of Shakespeare, as of course Shakespeare, though no party to our weakness, no participator in our moral obliquity, always meant it should. Love Falstaff we somehow must. In a sense and a very real sense his is a terrible character. That such a man should be "after the passion of a thousand years" so old and so profane is a thing not to be got over lightly, as Hazlitt would see us over it. Shakespeare did not mean his passages of horror to be struck out of the text. There those passages are, and there they must remain, "burning, burning."

But this sense is not the prevailing sense, or Falstaff would not be what he is to the English-speaking race, — a rich estate to be enjoyed by them and their heirs for ever. By the exercise, on the most prodigious scale, of sheer mother-wit and inventiveness, Shakespeare has bodily lifted this marvellous creature of his fancy, "this ton of a man," up and above the essential corruption of his character into an atmosphere of humour, clear and buoyant, the like of which was never experienced before, where every healthy being, unless he be one of those whom no man can make laugh, can breathe with freedom and joy. With such a gale of wind blowing from off the sea, who need think of drains or cesspools!

Falstaff's wit carries all before it. It is no pothouse merriment — no matter to amuse a Prince. It is the best wit in the world. This gives it a dignity which reacts upon Sir John himself. The Prince has a ready wit, but when he engages Falstaff in single combat, he cuts but a poor figure and goes limping off the field.

## INTRODUCTION

His companions had at least the sense to know Falstaff to be irresistible. In the scene where Prince Henry and Poins are disguised like drawers and wait upon Falstaff at Dame Quickly's, Poins urges the Prince to press it home upon the knight : " My lord, he will drive you out of your revenge, and turn all to a merriment if you take not the heat." The Prince remembered this advice later on, when having come into his own, and taken it upon himself, very properly no doubt, to dismiss Falstaff from his presence, he somewhat unluckily found himself once more referring to his old companion's girth : —

" Know, the grave doth gape  
For thee thrice wider than for other men."

Then hastily adds, for he saw a twinkle in the old man's eye and knew himself undone were Falstaff but allowed to speak : —

" Reply not to me with a fool-born jest ! "

Heavens, what would one not give for the jest that then trembled on Falstaff's tongue !

The Chief Justice was a learned man, well deserving his high place, but we should scar his best considered judgments in vain for traces of that admirable style which was bred in him by contact with Falstaff. The speech beginning " Do you set down your name in the scroll of youth that are written down old with all characters of Age ? " is good proof how in another sense than Falstaff used the words " he was the cause that wit is in other men."

## FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

There is nothing homely about Falstaff's wit, ready as lightning though it always was. The language which conveys it is perfect of its kind. Even in abuse, his choice of epithets is far above the Prince's. His eloquence is beyond all comparison, his satire biting, whilst his happiness of composition, his trick of language, is sweeter than the honey of Hybla. By the side of Falstaff's intelligence and felicity of expression, the other characters, great as some of them are, show small. Hotspur handles Glendower well enough, but what "hardiment" would not Falstaff have exchanged with the Welshman could he but have met him face to face! As it is, we have a description:—

"And he of Wales, that gave Amaimon the bastinado, and made Lucifer cuckold, and swore the devil his true liegeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook — what a plague call you him?"

*Poins.* O, Glendower."

Sir John is only once introduced to us as being both in good company and of it. He is with the King, the Prince of Wales, John of Lancaster, the Earl of Westmoreland, and Sir Walter Blunt. He comports himself well, and when Lord Worcester enters and protests to the King that he had not sought rebellion, and the King retorts:—

"You have not sought it! how comes it then?"

Sir John sarcastically observes:—

"Rebellion lay in his way, and he found it."

## INTRODUCTION

The remark reminds one a little of the glorious Bastard, who stands for England in the play of "King John."

What a critic he was of men we may judge from the great speech in which he declares he can see the bottom of Justice Shallow. How would Carlyle have got through life or written "Sartor Resartus" without the lines so often at the end of his pen: "When he was naked, he was, for all the world, like a forked radish, with a head fantastically carved upon it with a knife."

At times there is a certain melancholy about Falstaff's utterances which is perhaps his only sign of grace. It is elusive, and escapes quotation marks, but it is there. He is no mere fat knight, wine-stained, with nothing in his pocket but "tavern reckonings, memorandums of bawdy houses, and one poor pennyworth of sugar-candy" to make him long-winded. He is the wittiest man that ever lived!

A. BIRRELL.



**THE FIRST PART OF  
KING HENRY IV**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ<sup>1</sup>

KING HENRY the Fourth.

HENRY, Prince of Wales, } sons to the King.  
JOHN of Lancaster, }

EARL OF WESTMORELAND.

SIR WALTER BLUNT.

THOMAS PERCY, Earl of Worcester.

HENRY PERCY, Earl of Northumberland.

HENRY PERCY, surnamed HOTSPUR, his son.

EDMUND MORTIMER, Earl of March.

RICHARD SCROOP, Archbishop of York.

ARCHIBALD, Earl of DOUGLAS.

OWEN GLENDOWER.

SIR RICHARD VERNON.

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

SIR MICHAEL, a friend to the Archbishop of York.

POINS.

GADSHILL.

PETO.

BARDOLPH.

LADY PERCY, wife to Hotspur, and sister to Mortimer.

LADY MORTIMER, daughter to Glendower, and wife to Mortimer.

MISTRESS QUICKLY, hostess of a tavern in Eastcheap.

Lords, Officers, Sheriff, Vintner, Chamberlain, Drawers, two  
Carriers, Travellers, and Attendants.

SCENE : *England and Wales*

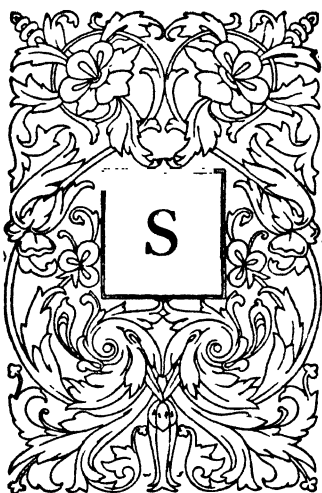
<sup>1</sup> This piece was first printed in 1598 in a quarto volume which was reprinted five times — in 1599, 1604, 1608, 1613, and 1622 — before it was included in the First Folio of 1623. The First Folio follows a corrected copy of the Fifth Quarto (of 1613). Acts and scenes are given in the First Folio, but in none of the Quartos. Rowe first supplied a list of the “dramatis personæ” and the “Scene.”



ACT ONE — SCENE I — LONDON  
*THE PALACE*

*Enter* KING HENRY, LORD JOHN of LANCASTER, the EARL of WEST-MORELAND, SIR WALTER BLUNT, *and others*

KING



O SHAKEN AS WE ARE,  
so wan with care,  
Find we a time for frightened  
peace to pant,  
And breathe short-winded ac-  
cents of new broils  
To be commenced in stronds  
afar remote.  
No more the thirsty entrance of  
this soil  
Shall daub her lips with her own  
children's blood ;  
No more shall trenching war  
channel her fields,

Nor bruise her flowerets with the armed hoofs  
Of hostile paces : those opposed eyes,

2-4 *Find we . . . remote*] Let us allow (domestic) peace, scared by our  
civil strifes, time to recover breath, and speak in quick and broken



Which, like the meteors of a troubled heaven, 10  
 All of one nature, of one substance bred,  
 Did lately meet in the intestine shock  
 And furious close of civil butchery,  
 Shall now, in mutual well-beseeming ranks,  
 March all one way, and be no more opposed  
 Against acquaintance, kindred and allies :  
 The edge of war, like an ill-sheathed knife,  
 No more shall cut his master. Therefore, friends,  
 As far as to the sepulchre of Christ,  
 Whose soldier now, under whose blessed cross 20  
 We are impressed and engaged to fight,  
 Forthwith a power of English shall we levy ;  
 Whose arms were moulded in their mothers' womb  
 To chase these pagans in those holy fields  
 Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet,  
 Which fourteen hundred years ago were nail'd

accents of new wars, to be undertaken abroad. The speaker takes up, without chronological interruption, his words at the close of the preceding play of *Richard II*, where he had promised to lead a crusade to the Holy Land.

4 *stronds*] strands, shores. The word is similarly spelt by the First Folio in 2 *Hen. IV*, I, i, 62.

5-6 *the thirsty entrance . . . blood*] "Entrance" here is used in the sense of "mouth." The figure is drawn from the Bible — *Genesis*, iv, 11 — where Cain is warned that "*the earth . . . hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood.*"

9 *those opposed eyes*] the eyes of hostile factions or forces; used of the forces themselves.

13 *close*] hand-to-hand grapple.

14 *mutual well-beseeming*] united (by common sentiment) and fitly equipped.

For our advantage on the bitter cross.  
 But this our purpose now is twelve month old,  
 And bootless 't is to tell you we will go:  
 Therefore we meet not now. Then let me hear  
 Of you, my gentle cousin Westmoreland,  
 What yesternight our council did decree  
 In forwarding this dear expedience.

30

WEST. My liege, this haste was hot in question,  
 And many limits of the charge set down  
 But yesternight: when all athwart there came  
 A post from Wales loaden with heavy news;  
 Whose worst was, that the noble Mortimer,

30 *Therefore we meet not now*] This is not the object of our present meeting.

33 *this dear expedience*] this important expedition or enterprise.

34 *hot in question*] hotly or vehemently discussed.

35 *limits of the charge*] definite arrangements of the undertaking.

38 *the noble Mortimer*] Mortimer, the Herefordshire magnate, who was defeated and taken prisoner by Glendower, 22 June, 1402, and then married his captor's daughter, was Sir Edmund Mortimer, a brother of Roger Mortimer, fourth Earl of March, and of Lady Percy, Hotspur's wife. Holinshed confuses this warrior with his nephew, Edmund Mortimer, fifth Earl of March, who claimed to be rightful heir to Richard II's throne. Shakespeare greatly complicates Holinshed's error. Shakespeare at times identifies Glendower's prisoner and son-in-law with his elder brother, the fourth Earl of March, who was proclaimed heir to the crown by Richard II early in his reign but predeceased that king, leaving his claim to his son, Sir Edmund Mortimer's nephew, the fifth Earl. Cf. I, iii, 145, *seq.*, and IV, iii, 93, *infra*. Elsewhere Shakespeare, not content with making Glendower's captive brother of Hotspur's wife (I, iii, 80, 142, and II, iii, 78), which is correct, describes him in another place as Lady Hotspur's nephew (III, i, 196).

Leading the men of Herefordshire to fight  
 Against the irregular and wild Glendower, 40  
 Was by the rude hands of that Welshman taken,  
 A thousand of his people butchered ;  
 Upon whose dead corpse there was such misuse,  
 Such beastly shameless transformation,  
 By those Welshwomen done, as may not be  
 Without much shame retold or spoken of.

KING. It seems then that the tidings of this broil  
 Brake off our business for the Holy Land.

WEST. This match'd with other did, my gracious lord ;  
 For more uneven and unwelcome news 50  
 Came from the north and thus it did import :  
 On Holy-rood day, the gallant Hotspur there,  
 Young Harry Percy, and brave Archibald,  
 That ever-valiant and approved Scot,  
 At Holmedon met,  
 Where they did spend a sad and bloody hour ;  
 As by discharge of their artillery,  
 And shape of likelihood, the news was told ;  
 For he that brought them, in the very heat

43 *corpse*] used for the plural "corpses." Cf. *Macb.*, V, i, 24, where the

Folios read: "Ay but their *sense are* shut."

50 *more uneven*] rougher, more troublesome.

52 *Holy-rood day*] September 14.

53 *brave Archibald*] Archibald Douglas, the fourth Earl of Douglas.

56 *their artillery*] Holinshed makes it plain that only arrows ("the incessant *shot* of arrows") were used in the battle.

57-58 *the news was . . . brought them*] Shakespeare used *news* indifferently as a singular and a plural word. Here it in the first line governs the verb in the singular and in the second line is mentioned as *them*.

And pride of their contention did take horse,  
Uncertain of the issue any way.

64

KING. Here is a dear, a true industrious friend,  
Sir Walter Blunt, new lighted from his horse,  
Stain'd with the variation of each soil  
Betwixt that Holmedon and this seat of ours ;  
And he hath brought us smooth and welcome news.  
The Earl of Douglas is discomfited :  
Ten thousand bold Scots, two and twenty knights,  
Balk'd in their own blood did Sir Walter see  
On Holmedon's plains. Of prisoners, Hotspur took 70  
Mordake the Earl of Fife, and eldest son  
To beaten Douglas ; and the Earl of Athol,  
Of Murray, Angus, and Menteith :  
And is not this an honourable spoil ?  
A gallant prize ? ha, cousin, is it not ?

WEST. In faith,  
It is a conquest for a prince to boast of.

KING. Yea, there thou makest me sad and makest me  
sin

In envy that my Lord Northumberland  
Should be the father to so blest a son,  
A son who is the theme of honour's tongue ;

80

69 *Balk'd*] Heaped up; arranged in balks or ridges.

71-72 *Mordake . . . beaten Douglas*] Shakespeare on this point misread  
Holinshed. Murdock or Murdoch, Earl of Fife and *Menteith* (line 73)  
was eldest son of the Duke of Albany, governor or regent of Scotland;  
he was not related to "beaten Douglas."

73 *and Menteith*] a subsidiary title of the Earl of Fife, who is mentioned in  
line 71, *supra*. Shakespeare errs in making the Earl of Fife and  
*Menteith* two persons.

Amongst a grove, the very straightest plant ;  
Who is sweet Fortune's minion and her pride :  
Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him,  
See riot and dishonour stain the brow  
Of my young Harry. O that it could be proved  
That some night-tripping fairy had exchanged  
In cradle-clothes our children where they lay,  
And call'd mine Percy, his Plantagenet !  
Then would I have his Harry, and he mine. 90  
But let him from my thoughts. What think you, coz,  
Of this young Percy's pride ? the prisoners,  
Which he in this adventure hath surprised,  
To his own use he keeps ; and sends me word,  
I shall have none but Mordake Earl of Fife.

WEST. This is his uncle's teaching ; this is Worcester,  
Malevolent to you in all aspects ;  
Which makes him prune himself, and bristle up  
The crest of youth against your dignity.

KING. But I have sent for him to answer this ; 100  
And for this cause awhile we must neglect  
Our holy purpose to Jerusalem.  
Cousin, on Wednesday next our council we  
Will hold at Windsor ; so inform the lords :  
But come yourself with speed to us again ;

83 *minion*] pet, favourite. Cf. I, ii, 25, *infra*.

97 *in all aspects*] an astrological term. Worcester is likened to a malignant star, all of whose "aspects" or positions in the heavens exert evil influence on King Henry's fortune.

98 *prune himself*] The figure is of a cock who manifests his proud self-sufficient temper by pruning or preening his feathers, *i. e.*, picking off the loose "feathers" and smoothing the rest.

For more is to be said and to be done  
Than out of anger can be uttered.

WEST. I will, my liege.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II—LONDON

*AN APARTMENT OF THE PRINCE'S*

*Enter the PRINCE OF WALES and FALSTAFF*

FAL. Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?

PRINCE. Thou art so fat-witted, with drinking of old sack and unbuttoning thee after supper and sleeping upon benches after noon, that thou hast forgotten to demand that truly which thou wouldst truly know. What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes capons, and clocks the tongues of bawds, and dials the signs of leaping-houses, and the blessed sun himself a fair hot wench in flame-coloured taffeta, I see no reason why 10 thou shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time of the day.

FAL. Indeed, you come near me now, Hal; for we

107 *out of anger*] when angry passions are roused.

2 *fat-witted*] dull-witted. Cf. *Hen. V.* III, vii, 130, "*fat-brained*."

3 *old sack*] See line 109, *infra*, and note.

4-5 *forgotten . . . truly know*] Falstaff's error apparently consists in asking the time of *day* at night-time.

8 *leaping-houses*] brothels.

9-10 *flame-coloured taffeta*] See *Tw. Night*, I, iii, 127: "a *flame-coloured* stock." "Taffeta" was a light and lustrous silken material.

that take purses go by the moon and the seven stars, and not by Phœbus, he, "that wandering knight so fair." And, I prithee, sweet wag, when thou art king, as, God save thy grace, — majesty I should say, for grace thou wilt have none, —

PRINCE. What, none?

FAL. No, by my troth, not so much as will serve to be prologue to an egg and butter.

20

PRINCE. Well, how then? come, roundly, roundly.

FAL. Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let not us that are squires of the night's body be called thieves of the day's beauty: let us be Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon; and let men say we be men of good government, being governed, as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we steal.

13 *the seven stars*] the Pleiades.

14 *Phœbus . . . so fair.*] Phœbus, *i. e.*, the sun, suggests the mention of "the Knight of the Sun," the hero of a popular Spanish romance, *El Donzel del Febo*, which was familiar in English translations.

21 *roundly*] directly, without evasion.

22-24 *let not us . . . day's beauty*] The general sense is that we who ply a (dishonest) trade by night have no wish to be called thieves in daytime. There is some characteristic quibbling on "night" and "knight." An attendant on a knight was entitled an "esquire" or a "squire of his body." "The day's beauty" is a mere periphrasis for "day," a fantastic counterpart of "night's body."

24 *Diana's foresters*] Diana was Goddess both of the moon and of the chase.

25 *minions*] Cf. I, i, 83, *supra*.

26 *good government*] good conduct.

PRINCE. Thou sayest well, and it holds well too; for the fortune of us that are the moon's men doth ebb <sup>30</sup> and flow like the sea, being governed, as the sea is, by the moon. As, for proof, now: a purse of gold most resolutely snatched on Monday night and most dissolutely spent on Tuesday morning; got with swearing "Lay by" and spent with crying "Bring in;" now in as low an ebb as the foot of the ladder, and by and by in as high a flow as the ridge of the gallows.

FAL. By the Lord, thou sayest true, lad. And is not my hostess of the tavern a most sweet wench?

PRINCE. As the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the <sup>40</sup> castle. And is not a buff jerkin a most sweet robe of durance?

FAL. How now, how now, mad wag! what, in thy quips and thy quiddities? what a plague have I to do with a buff jerkin?

34 "*Lay by*" ] A nautical term. The meaning is here "Stand close" (cf. II, ii, 72 and 93, *infra*), the highwaymen's word of private warning among themselves to prepare for attack on a passer-by.

35 "*Bring in*" ] sc. drink.

40 *Hybla*] A town in Sicily celebrated by classical poets for the sweetness of its honey. Cf. *Jul. Caes.*, V, i, 34: "the *Hybla* bees."

40-41 *my old lad of the castle*] a punning allusion to the name of Sir John Oldcastle, which Shakespeare bestowed on Falstaff in the first draft of the piece. Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, Epilogue, 29-30: "for *Oldcastle* died a martyr, and this is not the man."

41-42 *a buff jerkin . . . durance*] Sheriff's officers were dressed in buff, and "durance" means both "imprisonment" and a coarse cloth well known for its durability.

44 *quips and . . . quiddities*] jesting repartees and subtle quibbles.



PRINCE. Why, what a pox have I to do with my hostess of the tavern?

FAL. Well, thou hast called her to a reckoning many a time and oft.

PRINCE. Did I ever call for thee to pay thy part? 50

FAL. No; I'll give thee thy due, thou hast paid all there.

PRINCE. Yea, and elsewhere, so far as my coin would stretch; and where it would not, I have used my credit.

FAL. Yea, and so used it that, were it not here apparent that thou art heir apparent—But, I prithee, sweet wag, shall there be gallows standing in England when thou art king? and resolution thus fobbed as it is with the rusty curb of old father antic the law? Do not thou, when thou art king, hang a 60 thief.

PRINCE. No; thou shalt.

FAL. Shall I? O rare! By the Lord, I'll be a brave judge.

PRINCE. Thou judgest false already: I mean, thou shalt have the hanging of the thieves and so become a rare hangman.

FAL. Well, Hal, well; and in some sort it jumps with my humour as well as waiting in the court, I can tell you.

58 *resolution thus fobbed*] boldness or courage thus foiled or deluded.

59 *antic*] buffoon. Cf. *Rich. II*, III, ii, 162: "Death . . . the *antic* sits."

PRINCE. For obtaining of suits?

FAL. Yea, for obtaining of suits, whereof the hangman<sup>70</sup> hath no lean wardrobe. 'Sblood, I am as melancholy as a gib cat or a lugged bear.

PRINCE. Or an old lion, or a lover's lute.

FAL. Yea, or the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe.

PRINCE. What sayest thou to a hare, or the melancholy of Moor-ditch?

FAL. Thou hast the most unsavoury similes, and art indeed the most comparative, rascalliest, sweet young prince. But, Hal, I prithee, trouble me no more with vanity. I would to God thou and I knew where<sup>80</sup>

69-71 *suits . . . wardrobe*] There is a quibble on the word "suits" in the double sense of petitions and clothes. The apparel of executed persons was the hangman's perquisite.

72 *gib cat*] tom cat.

*lugged bear*] apparently a tame bear dragged about by showmen by collar and chain.

74 *Lincolnshire bagpipe*] Elizabethan writers associate bagpipes with Lincolnshire as frequently as modern writers associate them with Scotland.

75 *a hare*] The hare was invariably credited by Elizabethans with a melancholy temperament. Cf. Drayton's *Polyolbion*, Book II: "a melancholy hare."

76 *Moor-ditch*] A broad unsavoury morass in Finsbury, which enjoyed among Elizabethans a reputation for generating a very depressing climate.

77 *similes*] Most of the original editions read *smiles*, which the fifth Quarto and later Folios correct. For the textual confusion see note on *All's Well*, V, ii, 23.

78 *comparative*] fond of comparisons. Cf. *L. L. L.*, V, ii, 832: "Full of comparisons and wounding flouts," and *infra*, II, iv, 242, and III, ii, 67.

a commodity of good names were to be bought. An old lord of the council rated me the other day in the street about you, sir, but I marked him not; and yet he talked very wisely, but I regarded him not; and yet he talked wisely, and in the street too.

PRINCE. Thou didst well; for wisdom cries out in the streets, and no man regards it.

FAL. O, thou hast damnable iteration, and art indeed able to corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal; God forgive thee for it! Before I knew<sup>90</sup> thee, Hal, I knew nothing; and now am I, if a man should speak truly, little better than one of the wicked. I must give over this life, and I will give it over: by the Lord, an I do not, I am a villain: I'll be damned for never a king's son in Christendom.

PRINCE. Where shall we take a purse to-morrow, Jack?

FAL. 'Zounds, where thou wilt, lad; I'll make one; an I do not, call me villain and baffle me.

PRINCE. I see a good amendment of life in thee; from praying to purse-taking.<sup>100</sup>

FAL. Why, Hal, 'tis my vocation. Hal; 'tis no sin for a man to labour in his vocation.

86-87 *wisdom . . . regards it*] Cf. Proverbs, i, 20, 24: "*Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets; . . . and no man regarded.*"

88 *damnable iteration*] an exasperating habit of repeating my words.

98 *baffle*] disgrace, degrade. Cf. *Tw. Night*, V, i, 356 (of Malvolio):

"How have they baffled thee."

*Enter POINS*

POINS! Now shall we know if Gadshill have set a match. O, if men were to be saved by merit, what hole in hell were hot enough for him? This is the most omnipotent villain that ever cried "Stand" to a true man.

PRINCE. Good morrow, Ned.

POINS. Good morrow, sweet Hal. What says Monsieur Remorse? what says Sir John Sack and Sugar? Jack! how agrees the devil and thee about thy soul, that thou soldest him on Good Friday last for a cup of Madeira and a cold capon's leg? 112

PRINCE. Sir John stands to his word, the devil shall have his bargain; for he was never yet a breaker of proverbs: he will give the devil his due.

POINS. Then art thou damned for keeping thy word with the devil.

PRINCE. Else he had been damned for cozening the devil. 119

POINS. But, my lads, my lads, to-morrow morning, by four o'clock, early at Gadshill! there are pilgrims going to Canterbury with rich offerings, and traders

103 *Gadshill*] This character's name is derived from the place so called near Rochester, which was long infested by highwaymen.

*set a match*] made an appointment for nefarious purposes; a technical term among robbers. Cf. II, ii, 49, *infra*, "*setter*."

109 *Sack and Sugar*] It was the habit of Elizabethan toppers to mix sugar with their wine. Falstaff's favourite beverage was clearly a Spanish wine resembling sherry — he calls it "*sherris-sack*," 2 *Hen. IV.* IV, iii, 95 — sweetened with copious admixtures of sugar. Cf. II, iv, 454, *infra*.

riding to London with fat purses: I have vizards for you all; you have horses for yourselves: Gadshill lies to-night in Rochester: I have bespoke supper to-morrow night in Eastcheap: we may do it as secure as sleep. If you will go, I will stuff your purses full of crowns; if you will not, tarry at home and be hanged.

FAL. Hear ye, Yedward; if I tarry at home and go not, I'll hang you for going. 130

POINS. You will, chops?

FAL. Hal, wilt thou make one?

PRINCE. Who, I rob? I a thief? not I, by my faith.

FAL. There's neither honesty, manhood, nor good fellowship in thee, nor thou camest not of the blood royal, if thou darest not stand for ten shillings.

PRINCE. Well then, once in my days I'll be a madcap.

FAL. Why, that's well said.

PRINCE. Well, come what will, I'll tarry at home.

FAL. By the Lord, I'll be a traitor then, when thou art king.

PRINCE. I care not.

POINS. Sir John, I prithee, leave the prince and me alone: I will lay him down such reasons for this adventure that he shall go.

FAL. Well, God give thee the spirit of persuasion and him the ears of profiting, that what thou speakest may

129 *Yedward*] A colloquial form of Edward.

131 *chops*] flesh meat, "fat chops."

136 *stand for ten shillings*] play for the trifling stake of ten shillings.

There is a quibble here on the word "royal," the name of a coin of ten shillings' value. For a similar pun see II, iv, 281, *infra*.

move and what he hears may be believed, that the true prince may, for recreation sake, prove a false thief; for the poor abuses of the time want countenance. Farewell: you shall find me in Eastcheap. 151

PRINCE. Farewell, thou latter spring? farewell, All-hallown summer! [Exit Falstaff.]

POINS. Now, my good sweet honey lord, ride with us to-morrow: I have a jest to execute that I cannot manage alone. Falstaff, Bardolph, Peto and Gadshill shall rob those men that we have already waylaid; yourself and I will not be there; and when they have the booty, if you and I do not rob them, cut this head off from my shoulders. 160

PRINCE. How shall we part with them in setting forth?

POINS. Why, we will set forth before or after them, and appoint them a place of meeting, wherein it is at

152 *thou*] Pope's emendation of the original reading *the*.

*All-hallown summer*] Summer-like weather which occasionally distinguishes the season of All-hallows day, November 1. Falstaff's gaiety of heart brightens the winter of his days. The autumnal summer is also called "Saint Martin's summer." Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, II, ii, 98, where Falstaff is called "the *martlemas*," i. e., Martinmas, or St. Martin's summer.

156 *Bardolph, Peto*] All the early editions read *Haruey, Rossill*, names without relevance to the play. Theobald, who substituted for them *Bardolph, Peto*, suggested that "Harvey" and "Rossill" were names of actors who took those parts. Nothing seems known elsewhere of actors so named. In II, iv, 167, 169, and 173, *Ross.*, i. e., Rossill, is set down in the Quartos as the speaker's name; these lines in the Folio are assigned to Gadshill. It is possible that Rossill, an insignificant "super," played more parts than one in the original production.

our pleasure to fail, and then will they adventure upon the exploit themselves ; which they shall have no sooner achieved, but we 'll set upon them.

PRINCE. Yea, but 't is like that they will know us by our horses, by our habits, and by every other appointment, to be ourselves. 170

POINS. Tut ! our horses they shall not see ; I 'll tie . them in the wood ; our vizards we will change after we leave them : and, sirrah, I have cases of buckram for the nonce, to immask our noted outward garments.

PRINCE. Yea, but I doubt they will be too hard for us.

POINS. Well, for two of them, I know them to be as true-bred cowards as ever turned back ; and for the third, if he fight longer than he sees reason, I 'll forswear arms. The virtue of this jest will be, the incomprehensible lies that this same fat rogue will tell us when we meet at supper : how thirty, at least, he fought with ; what wards, what blows, what extremities he endured ; and in the reproof of this lies the jest. 183

PRINCE. Well, I 'll go with thee : provide us all things necessary and meet me to-morrow night in Eastcheap ; there I 'll sup. Farewell.

POINS. Farewell, my lord. [Exit.

PRINCE. I know you all, and will a while uphold  
The unyoked humour of your idleness :

---

169-170 *appointment*] equipment.

173 *cases*] overcoats.

182 *wards*] guards.

183 *reproof*] refutation. Cf. III, ii, 23, *infra*.

189 *unyoked*] untamed, undisciplined, licentious.

Yet herein will I imitate the sun,  
 Who doth permit the base contagious clouds  
 To smother up his beauty from the world,  
 That, when he please again to be himself,  
 Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at,  
 By breaking through the foul and ugly mists  
 Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.  
 If all the year were playing holidays,  
 To sport would be as tedious as to work ;  
 But when they seldom come they wish'd for come,  
 And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents. 190  
 So, when this loose behavior I throw off  
 And pay the debt I never promised,  
 By how much better than my word I am,  
 By so much shall I falsify men's hopes ;  
 And like bright metal on a sullen ground,  
 My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,  
 Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes  
 Than that which hath no foil to set it off.  
 I 'll so offend, to make offence a skill ; 209  
 Redeeming time when men think least I will. [Exit.

191-195 *Who doth permit . . . ugly mists*] Cf. *Sonnet xxxiii*, 1-2, 5-6:  
 "Full many a glorious morning have I seen Flatter the mountain-tops  
 with sovereign eye, . . . Anon *permit the basest clouds* to ride *With*  
*ugly rack* on his celestial face."

197-199 *If all the year . . . wish'd for come*] Cf. *Sonnet lii*, 5-7: "There-  
 fore are *feasts so solemn and so rare*, Since, *seldom coming*, in the long  
 year set, Like stones of worth they thinly placed are."

209 *to make offence a skill*] so as to derive advantage from obnoxious  
 conduct.



## SCENE III — LONDON

## THE PALACE

*Enter the KING, NORTHUMBERLAND, WORCESTER, HOTSPUR, SIR  
WALTER BLUNT, with others*

KING. My blood hath been too cold and temperate,  
Unapt to stir at these indignities,  
And you have found me ; for accordingly  
You tread upon my patience : but be sure  
I will from henceforth rather be myself,  
Mighty and to be fear'd, than my condition ;  
Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young down,  
And therefore lost that title of respect  
Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud.

WOR. Our house, my sovereign liege, little deserves 10  
The scourge of greatness to be used on it ;  
And that same greatness to which our own hands  
Have help to make so portly.

NORTH. My lord, —

KING. Worcester, get thee gone ; for I do see  
Danger and disobedience in thine eye :  
O, sir, your presence is too bold and peremptory,

---

3 *found me; for*] This is the original reading. *Found me* is equivalent to “found me out,” i. e., discovered my easy-going tendency. Keightley unnecessarily proposed to read *found me so*, and to make *Accordingly* begin a new sentence.

5-6 *I will . . . my condition*] Henceforth I will rather be the veritable king (that I am), mighty and to be feared, than follow my natural bent or temper of mind.

And majesty might never yet endure  
 The moody frontier of a servant brow.  
 You have good leave to leave us: when we need 20  
 Your use and counsel, we shall send for you. [*Exit Wor.*  
 You were about to speak. [*To North.*

NORTH. Yea, my good lord.  
 Those prisoners in your highness' name demanded,  
 Which Harry Percy here at Holmedon took,  
 Were, as he says, not with such strength denied  
 As is deliver'd to your majesty:  
 Either envy, therefore, or misprision  
 Is guilty of this fault and not my son.

HOT. My liege, I did deny no prisoners. 30  
 But I remember, when the fight was done,  
 When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,  
 Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,  
 Came there a certain lord, neat, and trimly dress'd,  
 Fresh as a bridegroom; and his chin new reap'd  
 Show'd like a stubble-land at harvest-home;  
 He was perfum'd like a milliner;  
 And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held

19 *frontier*] front or forehead. The word here has much the same meaning as "brow," which figures tautologically at the end of the line.

20 *good leave*] our full assent.

25 *with such strength denied*] with such vehemence refused.

27 *envy . . . misprision*] malice . . . misunderstanding.

34 *chin new reap'd*] freshly trimmed, cropped close in accord with the fashionable vogue.

36 *milliner*] dealer in fancy articles of attire; a trade invariably carried on by men in Shakespeare's day.

A pouncet-box, which ever and anon  
He gave his nose and took 't away again ;  
Who therewith angry, when it next came there, 40  
Took it in snuff ; and still he smiled and talk'd,  
And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,  
He call'd them untaught knaves, unmannerly,  
To bring a slovenly unhandsome corse  
Betwixt the wind and his nobility.  
With many holiday and lady terms  
He question'd me ; amongst the rest, demanded  
My prisoners in your majesty's behalf.  
I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold,  
To be so pester'd with a popinjay, 50  
Out of my grief and my impatience,  
Answer'd neglectingly I know not what,  
He should, or he should not ; for he made me mad  
To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,  
And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman  
Of guns and drums and wounds,—God save the mark !—  
And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth  
Was *parmaceti* for an inward bruise ;  
And that it was great pity, so it was,  
This villanous salt-petre should be digg'd 60  
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,

37 *A pouncet-box*] A box containing aromatic herbs, with a perforated cover.

41 *Took it in snuff*] Snuffed it up. The phrase, which also meant “took offence,” has a double meaning here.

51 *grief*] pain.

58 *parmaceti*] a popular form of *spermaceti*.

Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd  
 So cowardly ; and but for these vile guns,  
 He would himself have been a soldier.  
 This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord,  
 I answer'd indirectly, as I said ;  
 And I beseech you, let not his report  
 Come current for an accusation  
 Betwixt my love and your high majesty.

BLUNT. The circumstance consider'd, good my lord, 70  
 Whate'er Lord Harry Percy then had said  
 To such a person and in such a place,  
 At such a time, with all the rest re-told,  
 May reasonably die and never rise  
 To do him wrong, or any way impeach  
 What then he said, so he unsay it now.

KING. Why, yet he doth deny his prisoners,  
 But with proviso and exception,  
 That we at our own charge shall ransom straight  
 His brother-in-law, the foolish Mortimer ;  
 Who, on my soul, hath wilfully betray'd 80  
 The lives of those that he did lead to fight  
 Against that great magician, damn'd Glendower,  
 Whose daughter, as we hear, the Earl of March

62 *a good tall fellow*] a strapping fellow.

65 *unjointed*] disjointed, incoherent.

75-76 *impeach* *What . . . said*] make what he then said matter for accusation.

78 *But with proviso and exception*] Save with the exceptional provision or qualification.

80 *His brother-in-law . . . Mortimer*] Cf. I, i, 38, *supra*, and note.

84 *the Earl of March*] Shakespeare is confusing Sir Edmund Mortimer,

Hath lately married. Shall our coffers, then,  
 Be emptied to redeem a traitor home ?  
 Shall we buy treason ? and indent with fears,  
 When they have lost and forfeited themselves ?  
 No, on the barren mountains let him starve ;  
 For I shall never hold that man my friend  
 Whose tongue shall ask me for one penny cost  
 To ransom home revolted Mortimer.

90

HOT. Revolted Mortimer !  
 He never did fall off, my sovereign liege,  
 But by the chance of war : to prove that true  
 Needs no more but one tongue for all those wounds,  
 Those mouthed wounds, which valiantly he took,  
 When on the gentle Severn's sedgy bank,  
 In single opposition, hand to hand,  
 He did confound the best part of an hour  
 In changing hardiment with great Glendower :  
 Three times they breathed and three times did they drink,  
 Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood ;

100

- who married Glendower's daughter, with his elder brother, fourth Earl of March, or with his nephew, fifth Earl. See I, i, 38, *supra*, and note.
- 87-88 *indent . . . themselves*] make indentures or treaties with terrors (viz., Glendower and Mortimer) when they have lost and forfeited all that made them formidable.
- 94-95 *fall off . . . war*] abandon his allegiance and fall into his enemy's power, except by the irresistible accident of war.
- 97 *mouthed*] gaping.
- 99 *opposition*] combat.
- 100 *confound*] consume.
- 101 *In changing hardiment*] In valiant struggle in which the well-matched combatants experienced alternations of fortune.

Who then, affrighted with their bloody looks,  
 Ran fearfully among the trembling reeds,  
 And hid his crisp head in the hollow bank  
 Bloodstained with these valiant combatants.  
 Never did base and rotten policy  
 Colour her working with such deadly wounds ;  
 Nor never could the noble Mortimer  
 Receive so many, and all willingly :  
 Then let not him be slander'd with revolt.

110

KING. Thou dost belie him, Percy, thou dost belie him ;  
 He never did encounter with Glendower :  
 I tell thee,

He durst as well have met the devil alone  
 As Owen Glendower for an enemy.  
 Art thou not ashamed ? But, sirrah, henceforth  
 Let me not hear you speak of Mortimer :  
 Send me your prisoners with the speediest means,  
 Or you shall hear in such a kind from me  
 As will displease you. My Lord Northumberland,  
 We license your departure with your son.  
 Send us your prisoners, or you will hear of it.

120

[*Exeunt King Henry, Blunt, and train.*]

HOT. An if the devil come and roar for them,  
 I will not send them : I will after straight

106 *his crisp head*] the curly head of the river god. It was the favourite conceit of Elizabethan poets to liken the ripples on a river's surface to wavy or curly hair.

109 *Colour her working*] Give its activity the plausible colour of honourable valour. "Colour" is used in the double sense of "stain" and "make specious."

113 *belie*] praise falsely.

And tell him so ; for I will ease my heart,  
Albeit I make a hazard of my head.

NORTH. What, drunk with choler ? stay and pause  
a while :

Here comes your uncle.

*Re-enter* WORCESTER

HOT. 130  
Speak of Mortimer !  
'Zounds, I will speak of him ; and let my soul  
Want mercy, if I do not join with him :  
Yea, on his part I 'll empty all these veins,  
And shed my dear blood drop by drop in the dust,  
But I will lift the down-trod Mortimer  
As high in the air as this unthankful king,  
As this ingrate and canker'd Bolingbroke.

NORTH. Brother, the king hath made your nephew mad.

WOR. Who struck this heat up after I was gone ?

HOT. He will, forsooth, have all my prisoners ; 140  
And when I urged the ransom once again  
Of my wife's brother, then his cheek look'd pale,  
And on my face he turn'd an eye of death,  
Trembling even at the name of Mortimer.

WOR. I cannot blame him : was not he proclaim'd  
By Richard that dead is the next of blood ?

128 *Albeit I make a hazard*] Thus the Quartos. The Folios read *Although*  
*it be with hazard*.

133 *on his part*] on his behalf, on his side.

137 *canker'd*] corroded, malignant.

142 *my wife's brother*] See I, i, 38, *supra*, and note.

143 *an eye of death*] a ghastly look of death.

145-146 *was not he proclaim'd . . . blood?*] Shakespeare here confuses  
Hotspur's friend and brother-in-law, Sir Edmund Mortimer, with

NORTH. He was ; I heard the proclamation :  
And then it was when the unhappy king, —  
Whose wrongs in us God pardon ! — did set forth  
Upon his Irish expedition ;  
From whence he intercepted did return  
To be deposed and shortly murdered. 150

WOR. And for whose death we in the world's wide  
mouth  
Live scandalized and foully spoken of.

HOT. But, softly, I pray you ; did King Richard then  
Proclaim my brother Edmund Mortimer  
Heir to the crown ?

NORTH. He did ; myself did hear it.

HOT. Nay, then I cannot blame his cousin king,  
That wish'd him on the barren mountains starve.  
But shall it be, that you, that set the crown 160  
Upon the head of this forgetful man,  
And for his sake wear the detested blot  
Of murderous subornation, shall it be,  
That you a world of curses undergo,  
Being the agents, or base second means,  
The cords, the ladder, or the hangman rather ?  
O, pardon me that I descend so low,

---

the latter's brother, the fourth Earl of March, who predeceased Richard II, and left his claim to his son, the fifth Earl, Sir Edmund Mortimer's nephew. See note on I, i, 38, *supra*.

149 *Whose wrongs in us*] Whose wrongs as far as our responsibility for them goes.

154 *scandalized*] defamed, made the subject of scandal.

162-163 *the detested blot . . . subornation*] the hateful stigma of having instigated or suborned murder.



To show the line and the predicament  
 Wherein you range under this subtle king ;  
 Shall it for shame be spoken in these days, 170  
 Or fill up chronicles in time to come,  
 That men of your nobility and power  
 Did gage them both in an unjust behalf,  
 As both of you — God pardon it ! — have done,  
 To put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose,  
 And plant this thorn, this canker, Bolingbroke ?  
 And shall it in more shame be further spoken,  
 That you are fool'd, discarded and shook off  
 By him for whom these shames ye underwent ?  
 No ; yet time serves wherein you may redeem 180  
 Your banish'd honours, and restore yourselves  
 Into the good thoughts of the world again,  
 Revenge the jeering and disdain'd contempt  
 Of this proud king, who studies day and night  
 To answer all the debt he owes to you  
 Even with the bloody payment of your deaths :  
 Therefore, I say, —

Wor. Peace, cousin, say no more :  
 And now I will unclasp a secret book,  
 And to your quick-conceiving discontents

173 *gage . . . behalf*] engage “your nobility and power” in an unrighteous cause.

176 *canker*] the dog-rose of the hedge. Cf. *Much Ado*, I, iii, 22-23: “I had rather be a *canker* in a *hedge* than a rose in his grace.”

183 *disdain'd*] disdainful.

188 *I will unclasp . . . book*] Cf. *Tw. Night*, I, iv, 13-14: “I have *unclasp'd* To thee *the book* even of my *secret soul*.”

189 *your quick-conceiving discontents*] your alert sense of resentment.

I'll read you matter deep and dangerous, 190  
As full of peril and adventurous spirit  
As to o'er-walk a current roaring loud  
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.

HOT. If he fall in, good night! or sink or swim:  
Send danger from the east unto the west,  
So honour cross it from the north to south,  
And let them grapple: O, the blood more stirs  
To rouse a lion than to start a hare!

NORTH. Imagination of some great exploit  
Drives him beyond the bounds of patience. 200

HOT. By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap,  
To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon,  
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,  
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,  
And pluck up drowned honour by the locks;  
So he that doth redeem her thence might wear  
Without corrival all her dignities:  
But out upon this half-faced fellowship!

192-193 *As to . . . spear*] The spear is laid across the foaming torrent to form a bridge. Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, I, i, 170, 171 (of Hotspur): "You knew he walk'd o'er perils, on an edge, More likely to fall in than to get o'er."

194 *or sink or swim*] a proverbial phrase of challenge to a desperate hazard.

201-208 *By heaven . . . fellowship*] This famous speech is quoted derisively as a specimen of rant in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, Induction.

206 *So he*] Provided that he.

207 *corrival*] rival, competitor.

208 *out upon this half-faced fellowship*] shame on this half-hearted, insincere sort of friendship.

WOR. He apprehends a world of figures here  
But not the form of what he should attend. 210  
Good cousin, give me audience for a while.

HOT. I cry you mercy.

WOR. Those same noble Scots  
That are your prisoners, —

HOT. I 'll keep them all ;  
By God, he shall not have a Scot of them ;  
No, if a Scot would save his soul, he shall not :  
I 'll keep them, by this hand.

WOR. You start away  
And lend no ear unto my purposes.  
Those prisoners you shall keep.

HOT. Nay, I will ; that 's flat :  
He said he would not ransom Mortimer ;  
Forbad my tongue to speak of Mortimer ; 220  
But I will find him when he lies asleep,  
And in his ear I 'll holla " Mortimer ! "

Nay,  
I 'll have a starling shall be taught to speak  
Nothing but " Mortimer," and give it him,  
To keep his anger still in motion.

WOR. Hear you, cousin ; a word.

HOT. All studies here I solemnly defy,  
Save how to gall and pinch this Bolingbroke :  
And that same sword-and-buckler Prince of Wales, 230

209-210 *He apprehends . . . attend*] His imagination swarms with figurative fancies, but ignores the character of the business in hand.

228 *defy*] renounce.

230 *sword-and-buckler*] the habitual accoutrement of menials or serving-

But that I think his father loves him not  
 And would be glad he met with some mischance,  
 I would have him poison'd with a pot of ale.

WOR. Farewell, kinsman : I'll talk to you  
 When you are better temper'd to attend.

NORTH. Why, what a wasp-stung and impatient  
 fool

Art thou to break into this woman's mood,  
 Tying thine ear to no tongue but thine own !

HOT. Why, look you, I am whipp'd and scourged with  
 rods,

Nettled, and stung with pismires, when I hear 240  
 Of this vile politician, Bolingbroke.

In Richard's time, — what do you call the place ? —

A plague upon it, it is in Gloucestershire ;

'T was where the madcap duke his uncle kept,

His uncle York ; where I first bow'd my knee

Unto this king of smiles, this Bolingbroke, —

'Sblood ! —

When you and he came back from Ravenspurgh.

NORTH. At Berkley-castle.

HOT. You say true : 250

---

men. The distinctive weapons of gentlemen were the rapier and dagger. The poet William Bas (or Basse) published a poem in 1602 entitled *Sword and Buckler; or Servingman's Defence*.

233 *a pot of ale*] the beverage of low tavern company with whom the prince consorts.

236 *wasp-stung*] Thus the First Quarto. The Second and later Quartos read *waspe-tongue* or *wasp tongue*. The Folios read *wasp-tongu'd*.

240 *pismires*] ants.

244 *kept*] resided, dwelt.

Why, what a candy deal of courtesy  
This fawning greyhound then did proffer me !  
Look, " when his infant fortune came to age,"  
And " gentle Harry Percy," and " kind cousin ;"  
O, the devil take such cozeners ! God forgive me !  
Good uncle, tell your tale ; I have done.

WOR. Nay, if you have not, to it again ;  
We will stay your leisure.

HOT. I have done, i' faith.

WOR. Then once more to your Scottish prisoners.  
Deliver them up without their ransom straight, 260  
And make the Douglas' son your only mean  
For powers in Scotland ; which, for divers reasons  
Which I shall send you written, be assured,  
Will easily be granted. You, my lord, [*To Northumberland.*  
Your son in Scotland being thus employ'd,  
Shall secretly into the bosom creep  
Of that same noble prelate, well beloved,  
The archbishop.

HOT. Of York, is it not ?

WOR. True ; who bears hard 270  
His brother's death at Bristol, the Lord Scroop.

251 *what . . . courtesy*] what a deal of sugary courtesy.

261-262 *mean For powers*] means or agent for raising forces.

266-267 *into the bosom creep Of*] ingratiate yourself with.

271 *His brother's . . . Lord Scroop*] Shakespeare adopts Holinshed's error of making "the Lord Scroop," William le Scrope, Earl of Wiltshire, whom Henry IV had executed at Bristol in 1399, a brother of Archbishop Scrope. Cf. *Rich. II*, III, ii, 141. They were very distant cousins.

I speak not this in estimation,  
As what I think might be, but what I know  
Is ruminated, plotted and set down,  
And only stays but to behold the face  
Of that occasion that shall bring it on.

HOT. I smell it : upon my life, it will do well.

NORTH. Before the game is a-foot, thou still let'st slip.

HOT. Why, it cannot choose but be a noble plot :

And then the power of Scotland and of York, 280  
To join with Mortimer, ha ?

WOR. And so they shall.

HOT. In faith, it is exceedingly well aim'd.

WOR. And 't is no little reason bids us speed,  
To save our heads by raising of a head ;  
For, bear ourselves as even as we can,  
The king will always think him in our debt,  
And think we think ourselves unsatisfied,  
Till he hath found a time to pay us home :  
And see already how he doth begin  
To make us strangers to his looks of love. 290

HOT. He does, he does : we'll be revenged on him.

WOR. Cousin, farewell : no further go in this  
Than I by letters shall direct your course.  
When time is ripe, which will be suddenly,  
I'll steal to Glendower and Lord Mortimer ;

272 *in estimation*] on conjecture, mere inference.

278 *Before . . . slip*] These are hunting phrases. "Let slip" is applied  
to letting hounds loose from their chains or leashes.

284 *head*] force, army.

292 *Cousin*] Kinsman; here nephew.

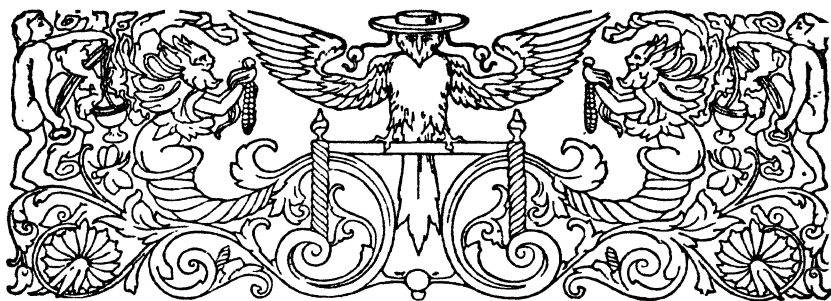
## THE FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV ACT I

---

Where you and Douglas and our powers at once,  
As I will fashion it, shall happily meet,  
To bear our fortunes in our own strong arms,  
Which now we hold at much uncertainty.

NORTH. Farewell, good brother: we shall thrive, I trust.

HOT. Uncle, adieu: O, let the hours be short 301  
Till fields and blows and groans applaud our sport!  
*[Exeunt.]*



## ACT SECOND — SCENE I — ROCHESTER

### AN INN YARD

*Enter a CARRIER with a lantern in his hand*

FIRST CARRIER



EIGH-HO! AN IT BE NOT  
four by the day, I'll be hanged :  
Charles' wain is over the new  
chimney, and yet our horse not  
packed. What, ostler !

OST. [*Within*] Anon, anon.

FIRST CAR. I prithee, Tom,  
beat Cut's saddle, put a few  
flocks in the point ; poor jade, is  
wrung in the withers out of all  
cess.

*Enter another CARRIER*

SEC. CAR. Peas and beans are as dank here as a dog,  
and that is the next way to give poor jades the bots :

1 *by the day*] by the morning light.

2 *Charles' wain*] The popular name of the constellation called "Ursa  
Major" or Great Bear.



this house is turned upside down since Robin Ostler died.

10

FIRST CAR. Poor fellow, never joyed since the price of oats rose; it was the death of him.

SEC. CAR. I think this be the most villanous house in all London road for fleas: I am stung like a tench.

FIRST CAR. Like a tench! by the mass, there is ne'er a king christen could be better bit than I have been since the first cock.

SEC. CAR. Why, they will allow us ne'er a jordan, and then we leak in your chimney; and your chamber-lie breeds fleas like a loach.

20

5 *beat Cut's saddle*] Cut, properly a horse with a docked tail, was a term often bestowed on horses generally. Cf. *Tw. Night*, II, iii, 176: "call me *cut*," and *infra*, II, iv, 187: "call me *horse*." "Beat" here means "soften by beating."

5-6 *put a few flocks in the point*] put a few pieces of wool on the point of the saddle, where the leather galls the horse by its hardness.

6 *is wrung in the withers*] is galled at the back of the neck (where the shoulder-blades meet).

7 *out of all cess*] out of all measure.

8 *dank . . . as a dog*] moist as a sweating dog.

9 *bots*] worms.

14 *stung like a tench*] Elizabethan naturalists doubtfully asserted that many fishes, including the tench, were the habitual prey of insect parasites.

16 *a king christen*] Thus the Quarto. The Folios read, *a king in Christendome*.

18-19 *jordan . . . leak . . . chimney*] chamber-pot . . . make water . . . fireplace.

19 *chamber-lie*] urine.

20 *like a loach*] The loach, a very small fish, was credited with incalculably great reproductive power.

FIRST CAR. What, ostler! come away and be hanged! come away.

SEC. CAR. I have a gammon of bacon and two razes of ginger, to be delivered as far as Charing-cross.

FIRST CAR. God's body! the turkeys in my pannier are quite starved. What, ostler! A plague on thee! hast thou never an eye in thy head? canst not hear? An 't were not as good deed as drink, to break the pate on thee, I am a very villain. Come, and be hanged! hast no faith in thee?

30

*Enter GADSHILL*

GADS. Good morrow, carriers. What's o'clock?

FIRST CAR. I think it be two o'clock.

GADS. I prithee, lend me thy lantern, to see my gelding in the stable.

FIRST CAR. Nay, by God, soft; I know a trick worth two of that, i' faith.

GADS. I pray thee, lend me thine.

SEC. CAR. Ay, when? canst tell? Lend me thy lantern, quoth he? marry, I'll see thee hanged first.

GADS. Sirrah carrier, what time do you mean to come to London?

41

SEC. CAR. Time enough to go to bed with a candle, I

23 *razes*] probably bales, each containing several score "races" of ginger the ordinary trade-name of ginger-roots. "Two razes or races" (taken quite literally) would not make a carman's load. Cf. *Wint. Tale*, IV, ii, 52-53: "A race or two of ginger."

38 *Ay, when? canst tell?*] An ejaculation of impatience, a scoffing denial of a request. See note on *Com. of Errors*, III, i, 52.

warrant thee. Come, neighbour Mugs, we'll call up the gentlemen : they will along with company, for they have great charge. *[Exeunt Carriers.]*

GADS. What, ho ! chamberlain !

CHAM. *[Within]* At hand, quoth pick-purse.

GADS. That's even as fair as — at hand, quoth the chamberlain ; for thou variest no more from picking of purses than giving direction doth from labouring ; thou layest the plot how.

51

*Enter CHAMBERLAIN*

CHAM. Good morrow, Master Gadshill. It holds current that I told you yesternight : there's a franklin in the wild of Kent hath brought three hundred marks with him in gold : I heard him tell it to one of his company last night at supper ; a kind of auditor ; one that hath abundance of charge too, God knows what. They are up already, and call for eggs and butter : they will away presently.

GADS. Sirrah, if they meet not with Saint Nicholas' clerks, I'll give thee this neck.

60

CHAM. No, I'll none of it : I pray thee, keep that for

45 *they have great charge]* they have heavy responsibility (in the treasure they carry). Cf. 57, *infra*, "abundance of charge."

46 *chamberlain]* the name of an inn-servant, who looks after the bed chambers. The office is now transferred to a chambermaid.

47 *At hand, quoth pick-purse]* a slang phrase for "coming at once."

51 *layest the plot how]* arrange the plot how (robbery is to be effected).

53-54 *a franklin . . . Kent]* a yeoman of the weald of Kent.

56 *auditor]* officer of the Exchequer, revenue officer.

57 *charge]* See note on line 45, *supra*.

59-60 *Saint Nicholas' clerks]* Thieves, "old Nick's" employees.

the hangman ; for I know thou worshippest Saint Nicholas as truly as a man of falsehood may.

GADS. What talkest thou to me of the hangman ? if I hang, I'll make a fat pair of gallows ; for if I hang, old Sir John hangs with me, and thou knowest he is no starveling. Tut ! there are other Trojans that thou dreamest not of, the which for sport sake are content to do the profession some grace ; that would, if matters should be looked into, for their own credit sake, make all whole. I am joined with no foot land-rakers, no long-staff sixpenny strikers, none of these mad mustachio purple-hued malt-worms ; but with nobility and tranquillity, burgomasters and great oneyers, such as can hold in, such as will strike sooner than speak, and speak sooner than drink, and drink sooner than pray : and yet, 'zounds, I lie ; for they pray continually to their saint, the commonwealth ; or rather, not pray to her, but prey on her, for they ride up and down on her and make her their boots.

79

70 *make all whole*] make all square.

71 *foot land-rakers*] tramps, vagabond pedestrians.

*long-staff sixpenny strikers*] footpads knocking passers-by down with a long stick to rob them of sixpences.

72 *mustachio purple-nued malt-worms*] toppers with their mustachios dyed with purple wine.

73 *burgomasters*] substantial merchants.

*great oneyers*] doubtless a magniloquent amplification of "great ones ;" "-yers" being affixed to "one" in a vein of burlesque, to give the word specious kinship with "moneyers" [*i. e.*, mint-masters].

74 *hold in*] keep their counsel.

79 *make her their boots*] there is a quibble here on "boots" in the ordinary

CHAM. What, the commonwealth their boots? will she hold out water in foul way?

GADS. She will, she will; justice hath liquored her. We steal as in a castle, cock-sure; we have the receipt of fern-seed, we walk invisible.

CHAM. Nay, by my faith, I think you are more beholding to the night than to fern-seed for your walking invisible.

GADS. Give me thy hand: thou shalt have a share in our purchase, as I am a true man.

CHAM. Nay, rather let me have it, as you are a false <sup>90</sup> thief.

GADS. Go to; "homo" is a common name to all men. Bid the ostler bring my gelding out of the stable. Farewell, you muddy knave. [*Exeunt.*]

sense of "riding-boots," as well as of "booties," profits. Cf. III, i, 67-68, *infra*.

82 *liquored*] greased or oiled.

83-84 *receipt of fern-seed*] Those who carried fern-seed about with them were, it was believed, thereby rendered invisible. The notion seems to have confusedly arisen from the fact that the fern plant carries its seed at the back of the leaves and the seed is itself invisible.

89 *purchase*] thieves' term for "plunder." Cf. *Hen. V*, III, ii, 40, 41: "They will steal anything, and call it *purchase*."

92 "*homo*" . . . *all men*] a thief being a man is entitled to that designation. Shakespeare plays with a quotation from Lily's Latin grammar and accidence, with which he gives in his plays frequent signs of familiarity (cf. *M. Wives*, IV, i).

94 *muddy*] dull-witted.

## SCENE II — THE HIGHWAY, NEAR GADSHILL

*Enter PRINCE HENRY and POINS*

POINS. Come, shelter, shelter : I have removed Falstaff's horse, and he frets like a gummed velvet.

PRINCE. Stand close.

*Enter FALSTAFF*

FAL. Poins ! Poins, and be hanged ! Poins !

PRINCE. Peace, ye fat-kidneyed rascal ! what a brawling dost thou keep !

FAL. Where's Poins, Hal ?

PRINCE. He is walked up to the top of the hill : I'll go seek him.

FAL. I am accursed to rob in that thief's company : 10  
the rascal hath removed my horse, and tied him I know  
not where. If I travel but four foot by the squier  
further afoot, I shall break my wind. Well, I doubt  
not but to die a fair death for all this, if I 'scape hang-  
ing for killing that rogue. I have forsworn his com-  
pany hourly any time this two and twenty years, and  
yet I am bewitched with the rogue's company. If the  
rascal have not given me medicines to make me love  
him, I'll be hanged ; it could not be else ; I have drunk

2 *frets . . . velvet*] inferior velvets were stiffened with gum, and easily  
fretted or frayed.

12 *by the squier*] by precise calculation. The squier is a variant name of  
the square, a carpenter's measuring rule.

18 *medicines to make me love him*] love philtres or powders.

medicines. Pains! Hal! a plague upon you both! <sup>20</sup>  
Bardolph! Peto! I'll starve ere I'll rob a foot further.  
An 't were not as good a deed as drink, to turn true  
man and to leave these rogues, I am the veriest varlet  
that ever chewed with a tooth. Eight yards of uneven  
ground is threescore and ten miles afoot with me; and  
the stony-hearted villains know it well enough: a plague  
upon it when thieves cannot be true one to another!  
[*They whistle.*] Whew! A plague upon you all! Give  
me my horse, you rogues; give me my horse, and be  
hanged!

PRINCE. Peace, ye fat-guts! lie down; lay thine ear <sup>30</sup>  
close to the ground and list if thou canst hear the tread  
of travellers.

FAL. Have you any levers to lift me up again, being  
down? 'Sblood, I'll not bear mine own flesh so far  
afoot again for all the coin in thy father's exchequer.  
What a plague mean ye to colt me thus?

PRINCE. Thou liest; thou art not colted, thou art  
uncolted.

FAL. I prithee, good Prince Hal, help me to my  
horse, good king's son. 40

PRINCE. Out, ye rogue! shall I be your ostler?

FAL. Go hang thyself in thine own heir-apparent  
garters! If I be ta'en, I'll peach for this. An I have

---

36 *colt*] trick, after the manner of a young vicious horse.

37 *uncolted*] without your horse.

42-43 *hang . . . garters*] the cant phrase here embodies a sly reference to  
the Order of the Garter.

43 *peach*] give information.

not ballads made on you all and sung to filthy tunes, let a cup of sack be my poison: when a jest is so forward, and afoot too! I hate it.

*Enter GADSHILL, BARDOLPH and PETO with him*

GADS. Stand.

FAL. So I do, against my will.

POINS. O, 'tis our setter: I know his voice. Bardolph, what news? 50

BARD. Case ye, case ye; on with your vizards: there's money of the king's coming down the hill; 'tis going to the king's exchequer.

FAL. You lie, ye rogue; 'tis going to the king's tavern.

GADS. There's enough to make us all.

FAL. To be hanged.

PRINCE. Sirs, you four shall front them in the narrow lane; Ned Poins and I will walk lower: if they 'scape from your encounter, then they light on us.

PETO. How many be there of them? 60

GADS. Some eight or ten.

FAL. 'Zgunds, will they not rob us?

PRINCE. What, a coward, Sir John Paunch?

FAL. Indeed, I am not John of Gaunt, your grandfather; but yet no coward, Hal.

PRINCE. Well, we leave that to the proof.

49 *setter*] a cant term for one who "sets a match" or organizes a robbery.

Cf. *supra*, I, ii, 103.

51 *Case ye . . . vizards*] cover yourselves; on with your masks.

64 *John of Gaunt*] John of Gaunt similarly plays on his own name, *Rich. II*, II, i, 82: "Gaunt am I for the grave, *gaunt* as a grave."



POINS. Sirrah Jack, thy horse stands behind the hedge: when thou needest him, there thou shalt find him. Farewell, and stand fast.

FAL. Now cannot I strike him, if I should be 70 hanged.

PRINCE. Ned, where are our disguises?

POINS. Here, hard by: stand close.

[*Exeunt Prince and Poins.*]

FAL. Now, my masters, happy man be his dole, say I: every man to his business.

*Enter the Travellers*

FIRST TRAV. Come, neighbour: the boy shall lead our horses down the hill; we'll walk afoot awhile, and ease our legs.

THIEVES. Stand!

TRAVELLERS. Jesus bless us!

FAL. Strike; down with them; cut the villains' 80 throats: ah! whoreson caterpillars! bacon-fed knaves! they hate us youth: down with them; fleece them.

TRAVELLERS. O, we are undone, both we and ours for ever!

FAL. Hang ye, gorbellied knaves, are ye undone? No, ye fat chuffs; I would your store were here! On,

73 *happy man be his dole*] good fortune be his lot. Cf. *M. Wives*, III, iv, 63, and note.

81 *caterpillars*] idlers, parasites.

*bacon-fed knaves*] chaw-bacons, yokels. Cf. 86, *infra*, "bacons."

85 *gorbellied*] potbellied, paunchy.

86 *chuffs*] the term is usually applied to well-to-do but unmannerly boors.

bacons, on! What, ye knaves! young men must live.  
You are grandjurors, are ye? we'll jure ye, 'faith.

*[Here they rob them and bind them. Exeunt.]*

*Re-enter PRINCE HENRY and POINS disguised*

PRINCE. The thieves have bound the true men. Now  
could thou and I rob the thieves and go merrily to 90  
London, it would be argument for a week, laughter for  
a month and a good jest for ever.

POINS. Stand close; I hear them coming.

*Enter the Thieves again*

FAL. Come, my masters, let us share, and then to  
horse before day. An the Prince and Poins be not two  
arrant cowards, there's no equity stirring: there's no  
more valour in that Poins than in a wild-duck.

PRINCE. Your money!

POINS. Villains!

*[As they are sharing, the Prince and Poins set upon  
them; they all run away; and Falstaff, after a  
blow or two, runs away too, leaving the booty  
behind them.]*

PRINCE. Got with much ease. Now merrily to  
horse: 100

The thieves are all scatter'd and possess'd with fear  
So strongly that they dare not meet each other;  
Each takes his fellow for an officer.

86 *bacons*] chaw-bacons. See line 81, *supra*, and note.

88 *jure*] Falstaff coins the verb out of "grandjurors."

91 *argument*] theme of talk.

Away, good Ned. Falstaff sweats to death,  
And lards the lean earth as he walks along :  
Were 't not for laughing, I should pity him.

POINS. How the rogue roar'd !

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III — WARKWORTH CASTLE

*Enter HOTSPUR solus, reading a letter*

HOT. "But, for mine own part, my lord, I could be well contented to be there, in respect of the love I bear your house." He could be contented: why is he not, then? In respect of the love he bears our house: he shows in this, he loves his own barn better than he loves our house. Let me see some more. "The purpose you undertake is dangerous;" — why, that 's certain: 't is dangerous to take a cold, to sleep, to drink; but I tell you, my lord fool, out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety. "The purpose you undertake is dangerous; the friends you have named uncertain; 10 the time itself unsorted; and your whole plot too light for the counterpoise of so great an opposition." Say you so, say you so? I say unto you again, you are a shallow cowardly hind, and you lie. What a lack-brain is this! By the

1 *But, for mine own part . . .*] The writer of the temporizing letter which Hotspur reads is not specifically named in the play. He has been identified by some commentators with a Scottish nobleman, George Dunbar, Earl of Dunbar and March, whom Shakespeare miscalls Lord Mortimer of Scotland, III, ii, 164, *infra*, and by others with Sir Thomas (or Ralph) Rokeby, High Sheriff of Yorkshire, whose loyalty to Henry IV is noticed in 2 *Hen. IV.* IV, iv, 97–99.

11 *unsorted*] ill-chosen, unsuitable.

Lord, our plot is a good plot as ever was laid; our friends true and constant: a good plot, good friends, and full of expectation; an excellent plot, very good friends. What a frosty-spirited rogue is this! Why, my lord of York commends the plot and the general course of the action. 'Zounds, an I were now by this rascal, I could <sup>20</sup> brain him with his lady's fan. Is there not my father, my uncle, and myself? lord Edmund Mortimer, my lord of York, and Owen Glendower? is there not besides the Douglas? have I not all their letters to meet me in arms by the ninth of the next month? and are they not some of them set forward already? What a pagan rascal is this! an infidel! Ha! you shall see now in very sincerity of fear and cold heart, will he to the king, and lay open all our proceedings. O, I could divide myself, and go to buffets, for moving such a dish of skim milk with <sup>30</sup> so honourable an action! Hang him! let him tell the king: we are prepared. I will set forward to-night.

*Enter* LADY PERCY

How now, Kate! I must leave you within these two hours.

LADY. O, my good Lord, why are you thus alone?  
For what offence have I this fortnight been  
A banish'd woman from my Harry's bed?

18 *my lord of York*] Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York.

29 *I could . . . go to buffets*] I could cut myself in two, and set the two parts at each other.

33 *Kate*] Lady Percy's real name was Elizabeth. Cf. I, i, 38, and note.  
But Hotspur invariably calls her Kate. Cf. III, i, *passim*.

Tell me, sweet Lord, what is 't that takes from thee  
 Thy stomach, pleasure, and thy golden sleep?  
 Why dost thou bend thine eyes upon the earth,  
 And start so often when thou sit'st alone? 40  
 Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy cheeks,  
 And given my treasures and my rights of thee  
 To thick-eyed musing and cursed melancholy?  
 In thy faint slumbers I by thee have watch'd,  
 And heard thee murmur tales of iron wars;  
 Speak terms of manage to thy bounding steed;  
 Cry "Courage! to the field!" And thou hast talk'd  
 Of sallies and retires, of trenches, tents,  
 Of palisadoes, frontiers, parapets,  
 Of basilisks, of cannon, culverin, 50  
 Of prisoners' ransom, and of soldiers slain,  
 And all the currents of a heady fight.  
 Thy spirit within thee hath been so at war  
 And thus hath so bestirr'd thee in thy sleep,  
 That beads of sweat have stood upon thy brow,  
 Like bubbles in a late-disturbed stream;

38 *stomach*] appetite.

*golden*] a conventional epithet of "sleep," common to Shakespeare's predecessors and contemporaries. Cf. *Tit. Adr.*, II, iii, 26: "*golden slumber*."

42 *my treasures . . . thee*] my treasured wifely rights; a hendiadys. Cf.

*Othello*, IV, iii, 86: "pour our *treasures* into foreign laps."

43 *thick-eyed*] purblind (to things outside yourself).

46 *terms of manage*] horsemen's phrases.

48 *sallies and retires*] sorties and retreats.

49 *frontiers*] outworks of forts.

50 *basilisks*] large pieces of ordnance.

*culverin*] small cannon.

And in thy face strange motions have appear'd,  
 Such as we see when men restrain their breath  
 On some great sudden hest. O, what portents are these ?  
 Some heavy business hath my lord in hand, 60  
 And I must know it, else he loves me not.

HOT. What, ho !

*Enter SERVANT*

Is Gilliams with the packet gone ?

SERV. He is, my lord, an hour ago.

HOT. Hath Butler brought those horses from the  
 sheriff ?

SERV. One horse, my lord, he brought even now.

HOT. What horse ? a roan, a crop-ear, is it not ?

SERV. It is, my lord.

HOT. That roan shall be my throne.

Well, I will back him straight : O esperance !

Bid Butler lead him forth into the park. [*Exit Servant.*

LADY. But hear you, my lord. 70

HOT. What say'st thou, my lady ?

LADY. What is it carries you away ?

HOT. Why, my horse, my love, my horse.

LADY. Out, you mad-headed ape !

A weasel hath not such a deal of spleen

59 *hest*] sudden behest, call, emergency. Thus the First Quarto. Other early editions read *haste*.

68 *back him*] mount him.

*O esperance*] the motto of the Percy family. Cf. V, ii, 97, *infra*.

72 *carries you away*] distracts, transports you.

75 *A weasel . . . spleen*] Cf. *Cymb.*, III, iv, 158: "*quarrelous as the weasel*." The weasel was proverbially credited with ill temper. But Hotspur's spleen is moody caprice rather than anger.

As you are toss'd with. In faith,  
I'll know your business, Harry, that I will.  
I fear my brother Mortimer doth stir  
About his title, and hath sent for you  
To line his enterprise: but if you go —

80

HOT. So far afoot, I shall be weary, love.

LADY. Come, come, you paraquito, answer me  
Directly unto this question that I ask:  
In faith, I'll break thy little finger, Harry,  
An if thou wilt not tell me all things true.

HOT. Away,  
Away, you trifler! Love! I love thee not,  
I care not for thee, Kate: this is no world  
To play with mammetts and to tilt with lips:  
We must have bloody noses and crack'd crowns,  
And pass them current too. God's me, my horse!  
What say'st thou, Kate! what wouldst thou have with  
me?

90

LADY. Do you not love me? do you not, indeed?  
Well, do not then; for since you love me not,  
I will not love myself. Do you not love me?  
Nay, tell me if you speak in jest or no.

HOT. Come, wilt thou see me ride?  
And when I am o' horseback, I will swear

78 *my brother Mortimer*] See I, i, 38, *supra*, and note.

80 *line*] strengthen, support.

82 *paraquito*] little parrot.

89 *mammetts*] puppets, dolls.

90–91 *crowns . . . current*] a quibble on the double meaning of the word  
“crowns” as “heads” and “coins.”

I love thee infinitely. But hark you, Kate ;  
I must not have you henceforth question me 100  
Whither I go, nor reason whereabout :  
Whither I must, I must ; and, to conclude,  
This evening must I leave you, gentle Kate.  
I know you wise, but yet no farther wise  
Than Harry Percy's wife : constant you are,  
But yet a woman : and for secrecy,  
No lady closer ; for I well believe  
Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know ;  
And so far will I trust thee, gentle Kate.

LADY. How ! so far ?

110

HOT. Not an inch further. But hark you, Kate :  
Whither I go, thither shall you go too ;  
To-day will I set forth, to-morrow you.  
Will this content you, Kate ?

LADY. It must of force. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV — THE BOAR'S-HEAD TAVERN IN  
EASTCHEAP

*Enter the PRINCE, and POINS*

PRINCE. Ned, prithee, come out of that fat room, and  
lend me thy hand to laugh a little.

POINS. Where hast been, Hal ?

PRINCE. With three or four loggerheads amongst three  
or fourscore hogsheads. I have sounded the very base-

---

101 *reason*] talk.

1 *fat room*] vat room; "vat" was often spelt "fat."



string of humility. Sirrah, I am sworn brother to a leash of drawers ; and can call them all by their christen names, as Tom, Dick, and Francis. They take it already upon their salvation, that though I be but Prince of Wales, yet I am the king of courtesy ; and tell me flatly I am no proud Jack, like Falstaff, but a Corinthian, a lad of 10 mettle, a good boy, by the Lord, so they call me, and when I am king of England, I shall command all the good lads in Eastcheap. They call drinking deep, dyeing scarlet ; and when 'you breathe in your watering, they cry "hem !" and bid you play it off. To conclude, I am so good a proficient in one quarter of an hour, that I can drink with any tinker in his own language during my life. I tell thee, Ned, thou hast lost much honour, that thou wert not with me in this action. But, sweet Ned, — to sweeten which name of Ned, I give thee this 20 pennyworth of sugar, clapped even now into my hand by an under-skinker, one that never spake other English in his life than "Eight shillings and sixpence," and "You are welcome," with this shrill addition, "Anon, anon, sir !

6-7 *leash of drawers*] Three greyhounds made up a leash. But the word was applied to any group of three.

8-9 *take it . . . upon their salvation*] assert, as they would be saved.

11 *a Corinthian*] a buck, a blood, a young man of spirit. Cf. the like use of "Ephesians," 2 *Hen. IV.*, II, ii, 143.

14-15 *when you breathe . . . play it off*] when you take breath while you are drinking, they express scorn of you with the exclamation "hem" and bid you finish it off.

22 *under-skinker*] inferior tapster or pot-boy, who kept pennyworths of sugar in folded papers for customers to mix with their drink.

Score a pint of bastard in the Half-moon," or so. But, Ned, to drive away the time till Falstaff come, I prithee, do thou stand in some by-room, while I question my puny drawer to what end he gave me the sugar; and do thou never leave calling "Francis," that his tale to me may be nothing but "Anon." Step aside, and I'll show thee a precedent.

POINS. Francis!

PRINCE. Thou art perfect.

POINS. Francis!

[*Exit Poins.*]

*Enter FRANCIS*

FRAN. Anon, anon, sir. Look down into the Pomgarnet, Ralph.

PRINCE. Come hither, Francis.

FRAN. My lord?

PRINCE. How long hast thou to serve, Francis?

FRAN. Forsooth, five years, and as much as to — 40

POINS. [*Within*] Francis!

FRAN. Anon, anon, sir.

PRINCE. Five year! by'r lady, a long lease for the clinking of pewter. But, Francis, darest thou be so valiant as to play the coward with thy indenture and show it a fair pair of heels and run from it?

25 *Score . . . bastard*] Score up a pint of the (sweet sort of Spanish muscadine) wine known as bastard. Cf. line 70, *infra*.

*Half-moon*] The name of a room in the tavern, like "Pomgarnet" in line 35. Cf. *Meas. for Meas.*, II, i, 122, where mention is made of a tavern room, called the "Bunch of Grapes."

28 *puny drawer*] the under-skinker of line 22, *supra*.

29 *leave calling*] stop calling.

35 *Pomgarnet*] A room in the tavern. Cf. line 25, *supra*, and note.

FRAN. O Lord, sir, I'll be sworn upon all the books in England, I could find in my heart.

POINS. [*Within*] Francis!

FRAN. Anon, sir.

50

PRINCE. How old art thou, Francis?

FRAN. Let me see — about Michaelmas next I shall be —

POINS. [*Within*] Francis!

FRAN. Anon, sir. Pray stay a little, my lord.

PRINCE. Nay, but hark you, Francis: for the sugar thou gavest me, 't was a pennyworth, was 't not?

FRAN. O Lord, I would it had been two!

PRINCE. I will give thee for it a thousand pound: ask me when thou wilt, and thou shalt have it.

POINS. [*Within*] Francis!

60

FRAN. Anon, anon.

PRINCE. Anon, Francis? No, Francis; but to-morrow, Francis; or Francis, o' Thursday; or indeed, Francis, when thou wilt. But, Francis!

FRAN. My lord?

PRINCE. Wilt thou rob this leathern jerkin, crystal-button, not-pated, agate-ring, puke-stocking, caddis-garter, smooth-tongue, Spanish-pouch, —

FRAN. O lord, sir, who do you mean?

66-68 *this leathern jerkin . . . Spanish-pouch*] Thus the Prince describes the dress and appearance of the tapster's master, the vintner, who wore a leather jacket ornamented with crystal buttons; was crop headed; with a ring on his finger adorned with an agate; his stockings of dull grey; with worsted lace garters; a smooth tongue in his head, and a paunch filled with Spanish wine.

PRINCE. Why, then, your brown bastard is your only 70  
drink; for look you, Francis, your white canvas  
doublet will sully: in Barbary, sir, it cannot come to  
so much.

FRAN. What, sir?

POINS. [*Within*] Francis!

PRINCE. Away, you rogue! dost thou not hear them  
call? [*Here they both call him; the drawer stands amazed,  
not knowing which way to go.*]

*Enter VINTNER*

VINT. What, standest thou still, and hearest such a  
calling? Look to the guests within. [*Exit Francis.*] My  
lord, old Sir John, with half-a-dozen more, are at the  
door: shall I let them in? 80

PRINCE. Let them alone awhile, and then open the  
door. [*Exit Vintner.*] Poins!

*Re-enter POINS*

POINS. Anon, anon, sir.

PRINCE. Sirrah, Falstaff and the rest of the thieves  
are at the door: shall we be merry?

POINS. As merry as crickets, my lad. But hark ye;  
what cunning match have you made with this jest of  
the drawer? come, what's the issue?

PRINCE. I am now of all humours that have showed  
themselves humours since the old days of goodman 90

70 *your brown bastard*] a Spanish wine of a brown colour; cf. line 25,  
*supra*. The Prince is here mystifying Francis by the irrelevance  
and incoherence of his remarks.

Adam to the pupil age of this present twelve o'clock at midnight.

*Re-enter FRANCIS*

What's o'clock, Francis?

FRAN. Anon, anon, sir.

[*Exit.*]

PRINCE. That ever this fellow should have fewer words than a parrot, and yet the son of a woman! His industry is up-stairs and down-stairs; his eloquence the parcel of a reckoning. I am not yet of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the north; he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife "Fie upon this quiet life! I want work." "O my sweet Harry," says she, "how many hast thou killed to-day?" "Give my roan horse a drench," says he; and answers "Some fourteen," an hour after; "a trifle, a trifle." I prithee, call in Falstaff: I'll play Percy, and that damned brawn shall play Dame Mortimer his wife. "Rivo!" says the drunkard. Call in ribs, call in tallow.

*Enter FALSTAFF, GADSHILL, BARDOLPH, and PETO; FRANCIS following with wine*

POINS. Welcome, Jack: where hast thou been? 106

FAL. A plague of all cowards, I say, and a vengeance too! marry, and amen! Give me a cup of sack, boy. Ere I lead this life long, I'll sew nether stocks and

---

98 *parcel*] items.

107 *Rivo!*] An exclamation, probably of Spanish origin, common among Elizabethan toppers.

111 *nether stocks*] stockings.

mend them and foot them too. A plague of all cowards !  
Give me a cup of sack, rogue. Is there no virtue  
extant ? [*He drinks.*]

PRINCE. Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter ? pitiful-hearted Titan, that melted at the sweet tale of the sun's ! if thou didst, then behold that compound. 116

FAL. You rogue, here's lime in this sack too : there is nothing but roguery to be found in villanous man : yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in it. A villanous coward ! Go thy ways, old Jack ; die when thou wilt, if manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring. There lives not three good men unchanged in England ; and one of them is fat, and grows old : God help the while ! a bad world, I say. I would I were a weaver ; I could sing psalms or any thing. A plague of all cowards, I say still. 127

114 *Titan*] A name commonly applied to the sun in classical poetry.

115 *pitiful-hearted Titan*] Thus all the early editions. But this reading is barely intelligible. Theobald substituted *pitiful-hearted butter*. If we retain *pitiful-hearted Titan*, those words must be treated as a parenthetic ejaculation ; *butter* must in any case be the antecedent of *that melted*. The prince is comparing the cup of sack which the heated and sweating Falstaff is greedily quaffing, to butter liquefying under the sun's rays.

116 *that compound*] that mixture (of melting fat and liquid).

117 *lime in this sack*] Lime was commonly inserted by the tapster to make the drink sparkle. Cf. line 119, *infra*, and see note on *M. Wives*, I, iii, 14.

122-123 *a shotten herring*] a herring that has shed its roe.

126 *a weaver*] Weavers (who sang at their work) were proverbially reckoned excellent singers. Cf. *Tw. Night*, II, iii, 57-58, and note.

PRINCE. How now, wool-sack! what mutter you?

FAL. A king's son! If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild-geese, I'll never wear hair on my face more. You Prince of Wales! 132

PRINCE. Why, you whoreson round man, what's the matter?

FAL. Are not you a coward? answer me to that: and Poins there?

POINS. 'Zounds, ye-fat paunch, an ye call me coward, by the Lord, I'll stab thee. 138

FAL. I call thee coward! I'll see thee damned ere I call thee coward: but I would give a thousand pound I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight enough in the shoulders, you care not who sees your back: call you that backing of your friends? A plague upon such backing! give me them that will face me. Give me a cup of sack: I am a rogue, if I drunk to-day.

PRINCE. O villain! thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drunkenest last.

FAL. All's one for that. [*He drinks.*] A plague of all cowards, still say I.

PRINCE. What's the matter? 150

FAL. What's the matter! there be four of us here have ta'en a thousand pounds this day morning.

130 *dagger of lath*] the weapon of the character known as the Vice in the old morality plays, resembling the wand of the modern Harlequin. Cf. *Tw. Night*, IV, ii, 120-124: "like to the old vice . . . Who, with *dagger of lath* . . . Cries ah, ha! to the devil," and *2 Hen. IV*, III, ii, 310, "this Vice's *dagger*."

PRINCE. Where is it, Jack? where is it?

FAL. Where is it! taken from us it is: a hundred upon poor four of us.

PRINCE. What, a hundred, man?

156

FAL. I am a rogue, if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them two hours together. I have 'scaped by miracle. I am eight times thrust through the doublet, four through the hose; my buckler cut through and through; my sword hacked like a hand-saw—*ecce signum*! I never dealt better since I was a man: all would not do. A plague of all cowards! Let them speak: if they speak more or less than truth, they are villains and the sons of darkness.

PRINCE. Speak, sirs; how was it?

GADS. We four set upon some dozen—

FAL. Sixteen at least, my lord.

GADS. And bound them.

PETO. No, no, they were not bound.

170

FAL. You rogue, they were bound, every man of them; or I am a Jew else, an Ebrew Jew.

GADS. As we were sharing, some six or seven fresh men set upon us—

FAL. And unbound the rest, and then come in the other.

157 *at half-sword*] at close quarters, within the range of the length of the opponent's sword.

167, 169, 173 GADS.] Thus the *Felios*. The *Quartos* read *Ross.*, *i. e.*, *Rossill*, the name of an inferior actor, who also figures in place of *Peto* in both the *Quarto* and *Folio* text of I, ii, 156, *supra*, where see note.



PRINCE. What, fought you with them all?

FAL. All! I know not what you call all; but if I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish: if there were not two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then am I no two-legged creature. 181

PRINCE. Pray God you have not murdered some of them.

FAL. Nay, that's past praying for: I have peppered two of them; two I am sure I have paid, two rogues in buckram suits. I tell thee what, Hal, if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face, call me horse. Thou knowest my old ward; here I lay, and thus I bore my point. Four rogues in buckram let drive at me —

PRINCE. What, four? thou saidst but two even now.

FAL. Four, Hal; I told thee four. 191

POINS. Ay, ay, he said four.

FAL. These four came all a-front, and mainly thrust at me. I made me no more ado but took all their seven points in my target, thus.

PRINCE. Seven? why, there were but four even now.

FAL. In buckram?

POINS. Ay, four, in buckram suits.

FAL. Seven, by these hilts, or I am a villain else.

179 *a bunch of radish*] Shallow is scornfully likened by Falstaff to “a forked radish” in *2 Hen. IV*, III, ii, 302.

185 *paid*] paid out, punished. Cf. V, iii, 45, *infra*.

187 *call me horse*] Cf. *Tw. Night*, II, iii, 176: “call me cut” (*i. e.*, a bobtailed horse).

188 *my old ward*] my old guard, my favourite posture of defence.

193 *mainly*] with might and main, violently.

PRINCE. Prithee, let him alone ; we shall have more anon.

201

FAL. Dost thou hear me, Hal ?

PRINCE. Ay, and mark thee too, Jack.

FAL. Do so, for it is worth the listening to. These nine in buckram that I told thee of, —

PRINCE. So, two more already.

FAL. Their points being broken, —

POINS. Down fell their hose.

FAL. Began to give me ground : but I followed me close, came in foot and hand ; and with a thought seven of the eleven I paid.

211

PRINCE. O monstrous ! eleven buckram men grown out of two !

FAL. But, as the devil would have it, three misbegotten knaves in Kendal green came at my back and let drive at me ; for it was so dark, Hal, that thou couldst not see thy hand.

PRINCE. These lies are like their father that begets them ; gross as a mountain, open, palpable. Why, thou clay-brained guts, thou knotty-pated fool, thou whore-son, obscene, greasy tallow-catch, —

221

207–208 *Their points . . . hose*] “Points” has the double meaning of “sword-points” and the “tags” or laces, which attached the (trunk) hose to the doublet.

209 *followed me*] “me” is the ethical dative.

210 *in foot and hand; and with a thought*] with great vigour; and with the quickness of thought.

220 *knotty-pated*] Thus the early editions. The word seems identical with “not-pated” (*i. e.*, crop-haired) of line 67, *supra*.

221 *tallow-catch*] apparently a receptacle for tallow-grease. The word

FAL. What, art thou mad? art thou mad? is not the truth the truth?

PRINCE. Why, how couldst thou know these men in Kendal green, when it was so dark thou couldst not see thy hand? come, tell us your reason: what sayest thou to this?

POINS. Come, your reason, Jack, your reason.

228

FAL. What, upon compulsion? 'Zounds, an I were at the strappado, or all the racks in the world, I would not tell you on compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion! if reasons were as plentiful as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I.

PRINCE. I'll be no longer guilty of this sin; this sanguine coward, this bed-presser, this horse-back-breaker, this huge hill of flesh, —

FAL. 'Sblood, you starveling, you elf-skin, you dried neat's tongue, you bull's pizzle, you stock-fish! O for breath to utter what is like thee! you tailor's

seems to be a misspelling either of "tallow-ketch," a tub of tallow, or of "tallow-keech," a roll of tallow prepared by butchers for chandlery purposes. Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, II, i, 90: "goodwife *Keech*, the butcher's wife."

225 *Kendal green*] green woollen cloth originally made at Kendal, which was famous in Shakespeare's day for the cloth-making industry.

230 *strappado*] a cruel punishment inflicted on soldiers, who were drawn up by a rope passed under their arms and suddenly let down, so that many bones were either dislocated or broken.

237 *elf-skin*] Thus the early editions, for which Hanmer substituted *eel-skin*. But "elf" here means any diminutive creature, and is the right reading.

yard, you sheath, you bow-case, you vile standing tuck, —

240

PRINCE. Well, breathe a while, and then to it again : and when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this.

POINS. Mark, Jack.

PRINCE. We two saw you four set on four and bound them, and were masters of their wealth. Mark now, how a plain tale shall put you down. Then did we two set on you four ; and, with a word, out-faced you from your prize, and have it ; yea, and can show it you here in the house : and, Falstaff, you carried your guts away as nimbly, with as quick dexterity, and roared for mercy, and still run and roared, as ever I heard bull-calf. What a slave art thou, to hack thy sword as thou hast done, and then say it was in fight ! What trick, what device, what starting-hole, canst thou now find out to hide thee from this open and apparent shame ?

256

POINS. Come, let's hear, Jack ; what trick hast thou now ?

FAL. By the Lord, I knew ye as well as he that made ye. Why, hear you, my masters : was it for me to kill the heir-apparent ? should I turn upon the true prince ? why, thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules : but

240 *standing tuck*] a rapier standing on end, which may well suggest great attenuation.

242 *comparisons*] See note on I, ii, 78, *supra*.

255 *starting-hole*] shelter in which a hunted animal, *e. g.*, the rabbit, takes refuge.

256 *apparent*] obvious, manifest.

beware instinct ; the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter ; I was now a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and thee during my life ; I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. But, by the Lord, lads, I am glad you have the money. Hostess, clap to the doors : watch to-night, pray to-morrow. Gallants, lads, boys, hearts of gold, all the titles of good fellowship come to you ! What, shall we be merry ? shall we have a play extempore ? 271

PRINCE. Content ; and the argument shall be thy running away.

FAL. Ah, no more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me !

*Enter Hostess*

HOST. O Jesu, my lord the prince !

PRINCE. How now, my lady the hostess ! what sayest thou to me ?

HOST. Marry, my lord, there is a nobleman of the court at door would speak with you : he says he comes from your father. 280

PRINCE. Give him as much as will make him a royal man, and send him back again to my mother.

FAL. What manner of man is he ?

HOST. An old man.

281 *royal*] There is a quibble here on the words "noble" and "royal," which were the names of coins. A "noble" was worth 6s. 8d., while the "royal" was of the value of 10s. The prince jestingly suggests that the difference between those two sums defines the interval between a "nobleman" (line 278) and a "royal man." For a like pun on "royal" cf. I, ii, 136, *supra*.

FAL. What doth gravity out of his bed at midnight ?  
Shall I give him his answer ?

PRINCE. Prithee, do, Jack.

FAL. Faith, and I'll send him packing. [Exit.

PRINCE. Now, sirs : by'r lady, you fought fair ; so did you, Peto ; so did you, Bardolph : you are lions too, you ran away upon instinct, you will not touch the true prince ; no, fie ! 292

BARD. Faith, I ran when I saw others run.

PRINCE. Faith, tell me now in earnest, how came Falstaff's sword so hacked ?

PETO. Why, he hacked it with his dagger, and said he would swear truth out of England but he would make you believe it was done in fight, and persuaded us to do the like. 299

BARD. Yea, and to tickle our noses with spear-grass to make them bleed, and then to beslobber our garments with it and swear it was the blood of true men. I did that I did not this seven year before, I blushed to hear his monstrous devices.

PRINCE. O villain, thou stolest a cup of sack eighteen years ago, and wert taken with the manner, and ever since thou hast blushed extempore. Thou hadst fire and sword on thy side, and yet thou rankest away : what instinct hadst thou for it ? 309

300 *spear-grass*] long, stiff grass.

306 *with the manner*] "in flagrante delicto," in the very act. Cf. *L. L. L.*, I, i, 199, and note.

307 *Thou hadst fire*] a reference to Bardolph's inflamed countenance.

BARD. My lord, do you see these meteors? do you behold these exhalations?

311

PRINCE. I do.

BARD. What think you they portend?

PRINCE. Hot livers and cold purses.

BARD. Choler, my lord, if rightly taken.

PRINCE. No, if rightly taken, halter.

*Re-enter FALSTAFF*

Here comes lean Jack, here comes bare-bone. How now, my sweet creature of bombast! How long is't ago, Jack, since thou sawest thine own knee?

319

FAL. My own knee! when I was about thy years, Hal, I was not an eagle's talon in the waist; I could have crept into any alderman's thumb-ring: a plague of sighing and grief! it blows a man up like a bladder. There's villanous news abroad: here was Sir John Bracy from your father; you must to the court in the morning. That same mad fellow of the north, Percy, and he of Wales, that gave Amamon the bastinado, and made Lucifer cuckold, and swore the devil his true

311 *exhalations*] meteors. Cf. *infra*, V, i, 19, "an *exhaled* meteor," and note.

314 *Hot livers and cold purses*] Hard drinking and empty purses.

318 *bombast*] stuffing or padding of clothes.

322 *alderman's thumb-ring*] aldermen and other magistrates wore rings on their thumbs.

327 *Amamon*] The name of an evil spirit, recorded by Reginald Scot in his *Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584), Book xv, ch. 2. Cf. *M. Wives*, II, ii, 264, where the word is again mentioned as the name of a fiend. *bastinado*] a stiff cudgelling.

liegeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook — what a plague call you him ?

POINS. O, Glendower.

330

FAL. Owen, Owen, the same ; and his son-in-law Mortimer, and old Northumberland, and that sprightly Scot of Scots, Douglas, that runs o' horseback up a hill perpendicular, —

PRINCE. He that rides at high speed and with his pistol kills a sparrow flying.

FAL. You have hit it.

PRINCE. So did he never the sparrow.

FAL. Well, that rascal hath good mettle in him ; he will not run.

340

PRINCE. Why, what a rascal art thou then, to praise him so for running !

FAL. O' horseback, ye cuckoo ; but afoot he will not budge a foot.

PRINCE. Yes, Jack, upon instinct.

FAL. I grant ye, upon instinct. Well, he is there too, and one Mordake, and a thousand blue-caps more : Worcester is stolen away to-night ; thy father's beard is turned white with the news : you may buy land now as cheap as stinking mackerel.

350

PRINCE. Why, then, it is like, if there come a hot June and this civil buffeting hold, we shall buy maiden-heads as they buy hob-nails, by the hundreds.

328 *liegeman*] subject.

329 *Welsh hook*] A long-handled weapon with a curved blade, sometimes known as " a Welsh glaive " [*i. e.*, halberd].

347 *blue-caps*] the blue bonnets distinctive of Scottish troops.

352 *civil buffeting*] civil warfare.



FAL. By the mass, lad, thou sayest true ; it is like we shall have good trading that way. But tell me, Hal, art not thou horrible afeard ? thou being heir-apparent, could the world pick thee out three such enemies again as that fiend Douglas, that spirit Percy, and that devil Glendower ? art thou not horribly afraid ? doth not thy blood thrill at it ?

360

PRINCE. Not a whit, i' faith ; I lack some of thy instinct.

FAL. Well, thou wilt be horribly chid to-morrow when thou comest to thy father : if thou love me, practise an answer.

PRINCE. Do thou stand for my father, and examine me upon the particulars of my life.

FAL. Shall I ? content : this chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown.

PRINCE. Thy state is taken for a joined-stool, thy golden sceptre for a leaden dagger, and thy precious rich crown for a pitiful bald crown !

371

FAL. Well, an the fire of grace be not quite out of thee, now shalt thou be moved. Give me a cup of sack to make my eyes look red, that it may be thought I have wept ; for I must speak in passion, and I will do it in King Cambyases' vein.

PRINCE. Well, here is my leg.

367 *my state*] my canopied throne.

369 *joined-stool*] a stool, the parts of which were joined or fitted together ; not a chair carved out of one piece of wood.

376 *in King Cambyases' vein*] in the ranting style of a notorious old play by Thomas Preston called *A lamentable tragedie . . . conteyning the life of Cambises, King of Percia* (1569).

377 *leg*] bow (of reverence), obeisance.

FAL. And here is my speech. Stand aside, nobility.

HOST. O Jesu, this is excellent sport, i' faith!

FAL. Weep not, sweet queen; for trickling tears are  
vain.

380

HOST. O, the father, how he holds his countenance!

FAL. For God's sake, lords, convey my tristful queen;  
For tears do stop the flood-gates of her eyes.

HOST. O Jesu, he doth it as like one of these harlotry  
players as ever I see!

FAL. Peace, good pint-pot; peace, good tickle-brain.  
Harry, I do not only marvel where thou spendest thy  
time, but also how thou art accompanied: for though  
the camomile, the more it is trodden on the faster it  
grows, yet youth, the more it is wasted the sooner it  
wears. That thou art my son, I have partly thy  
mother's word, partly my own opinion, but chiefly a  
villanous trick of thine eye, and a foolish hanging of thy  
nether lip, that doth warrant me. If then thou be son

382 *convey my tristful queen*] lead away my sorrowful queen.

384 *harlotry*] a common variant of "harlot," which was itself sometimes  
applied to men, in the general sense of blackguards. Cf. *Com. of  
Errors*, V, i, 205: "She with *harlots* [*i e.*, vicious youths] feasted."  
"Harlot" and "harlotry" were also applied to women in the sense  
of hussy or baggage without immoral insinuation. See III., i, 199,  
*infra*: "a peevish self-will'd *harlotry*."

386 *tickle-brain*] a nickname of strong liquor.

389-391 *the camomile . . . sooner it wears*] These sentences parody a pas-  
sage in Lyly's *Euphues* (ed. Arber, p. 46): "Though the *camomill*,  
the more it is troden and pressed downe, the more it spreadeth, yet the  
violet the oftner it is handeled and touched, the sooner it withereth  
and decayeth."

to me, here lies the point ; why, being son to me, art thou so pointed at ? Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a micher and eat blackberries ? a question not to be asked. Shall the son of England prove a thief and take purses ? a question to be asked. There is a thing, Harry, which thou hast often heard of, and it is known to many in our land by the name of pitch : this pitch, as ancient writers do report, doth defile ; so doth the company thou keepest : for, Harry, now I do not speak to thee in drink but in tears, not in pleasure but in passion, not in words only, but in woes also : and yet there is a virtuous man whom I have often noted in thy company, but I know not his name.

406

PRINCE. What manner of man, an it like your majesty ?

FAL. A goodly portly man, i' faith, and a corpulent ; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye, and a most noble carriage ; and, as I think, his age some fifty, or, by 'r lady, inclining to three score ; and now I remember me, his name is Falstaff : if that man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me ; for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks. If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then, peremptorily I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff ; him keep with, the rest

396 *a micher*] a truant. A "blackberry moucher" is an expression still in provincial use for a boy who plays truant to pick blackberries.

401 *ancient writers*] Cf. *Ecclesiasticus*, xiii, 1: "He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith."

412 *lewdly given*] inclined to wickedness.

banish. And tell me now, thou naughty varlet, tell me, where hast thou been this month ? 417

PRINCE. Dost thou speak like a king ? Do thou stand for me, and I'll play my father.

FAL. Depose me ? if thou dost it half so gravely, so majestically, both in word and matter, hang me up by the heels for a rabbit-sucker or a poulter's hare.

PRINCE. Well, here I am set.

FAL. And here I stand : judge, my masters.

PRINCE. Now, Harry, whence come you ?

FAL. My noble lord, from Eastcheap.

PRINCE. The complaints I hear of thee are grievous.

FAL. 'Sblood, my lord, they are false : nay, I'll tickle ye for a young prince, i' faith. 429

PRINCE. Swarest thou, ungracious boy ? henceforth ne'er look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace : there is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of an old fat man ; a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted Manningtree ox with the pud-

422 *a rabbit-sucker or a poulter's hare*] a sucking rabbit or a hare in a poulterer's shop.

428-429 *I'll tickle ye for a young prince*] I'll play the part of a young prince so as to make you sit up.

435 *bolting-hutch*] the large tub into which the meal falls after being bolted or sifted.

436 *bombard*] a leather jug or black-jack.

437 *Manningtree ox*] The agricultural town of Manningtree in Essex

ding in his belly, that reverend vice, that grey iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years? Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it? wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it? wherein cunning, but in craft? wherein crafty, but in villany? wherein villanous, but in all things? wherein worthy, but in nothing?

443

FAL. I would your grace would take me with you: 'whom means your grace?

PRINCE. That villanous abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan.

FAL. My lord, the man I know.

PRINCE. I know thou dost.

FAL. But to say I know more harm in him than in myself, were to say more than I know. That he is old, the more the pity, his white hairs do witness it; but that he is, saving your reverence, a whoremaster, that I utterly deny. If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked! if to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old host that I know is damned: if to be fat be to be hated, then Pharaoh's lean kine are to be loved. No, my good lord; banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish

seems to have been famous for its breed of fat oxen. A famous fair was held there annually.

438 *vice . . . iniquity*] alternative names of a clownish character in the old morality plays. Cf. *Rich. III*, III, i, 82: "like the formal *vice*, *Iniquity*," and note.

441 *cunning*] skilled, skilful.

444 *take me with you*] make your meaning clear to me.

454 *sack and sugar*] Cf. I, ii, 109, and note.

Poins: but for sweet Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff, and therefore more valiant, being, as he is, old Jack Falstaff, banish not him thy Harry's company, banish not him thy Harry's company: banish plump Jack, and banish all the world.

463

PRINCE. I do, I will.

[*A knocking heard.*

[*Exeunt Hostess, Francis, and Bardolph.*

*Re-enter* BARDOLPH, *running*

BARD. O, my lord, my lord! the sheriff with a most monstrous watch is at the door.

FAL. Out, ye rogue! Play out the play: I have much to say in the behalf of that Falstaff.

*Re-enter the Hostess*

HOST. O Jesu, my lord, my lord!—

PRINCE. Heigh, heigh! the devil rides upon a fiddlestick: what's the matter?

471

HOST. The sheriff and all the watch are at the door: they are come to search the house. Shall I let them in?

FAL. Dost thou hear, Hal? never call a true piece of gold a counterfeit: thou art essentially mad, without seeming so.

470-471 *Heigh, heigh! . . . matter*] The first three Quartos give this speech to the Prince. The Folios assign it to Falstaff.

470 *the devil . . . fiddlestick*] a proverbial phrase of ridicule, meaning "here's a to-do about nothing."

475-476 *thou art essentially mad, without seeming so*] you are really mad (by the way you have been taking me off): there is no need to pretend to be a lunatic.

PRINCE. And thou a natural coward, without instinct.

FAL. I deny your major: if you will deny the sheriff, so; if not, let him enter: if I become not a cart as well as another man, a plague on my bringing up! I hope I shall as soon be strangled with a halter as another. 481

PRINCE. Go, hide thee behind the arras: the rest walk up above. Now, my masters, for a true face and good conscience.

FAL. Both which I have had; but their date is out, and therefore I'll hide me.

PRINCE. Call in the sheriff.

*[Exeunt all except the Prince and Peto.]*

*Enter Sheriff and the Carrier*

Now, master sheriff, what is your will with me?

SHER. First, pardon me, my lord. A hue and cry Hath follow'd certain men unto this house. 490

PRINCE. What men?

SHER. One of them is well known, my gracious lord, A gross fat man.

CAR. As fat as butter.

PRINCE. The man, I do assure you, is not here; For I myself at this time have employ'd him. And, sheriff, I will engage my word to thee

---

478 *major*] the major proposition of a logical syllogism; here put for the proposition itself. "Major" being pronounced "mayor" by Falstaff makes the punning allusion to "the sheriff" clear.

479 *become not a cart*] look not well in the cart (which takes the criminal to the scaffold).

482 *arras*] tapestry hanging at some distance from the walls.

485 *their date is out*] their time is past.

That I will, by to-morrow dinner-time,  
 Send him to answer thee, or any man,  
 For any thing he shall be charged withal;  
 And so let me entreat you leave the house.

500

SHER. I will, my lord. There are two gentlemen  
 Have in this robbery lost three hundred marks.

PRINCE. It may be so : if he have robb'd these men,  
 He shall be answerable ; and so farewell.

SHER. Good night, my noble lord.

PRINCE. I think it is good morrow, is it not ?

SHER. Indeed, my lord, I think it be two o'clock.

*[Exeunt Sheriff and Carrier.]*

PRINCE. This oily rascal is known as well as Paul's.  
 Go, call him forth.

509

PETO. Falstaff! — Fast asleep behind the arras, and  
 snorting like a horse.

PRINCE. Hark, how hard he fetches breath. Search  
 his pockets. *[He searcheth his pockets, and findeth certain papers.]*  
 What hast thou found ?

PETO. Nothing but papers, my lord.

PRINCE. Let's see what they be : read them.

PETO. *[reads]* Item, A capon, . . . . . 2s. 2d.  
 Item, Sauce, . . . . . 4d.  
 Item, Sack, two gallons, . . . . . 5s. 8d.  
 Item, Anchovies and sack after supper, 2s. 6d. 520  
 Item, Bread, . . . . . ob.

502 *three hundred marks]* two hundred pounds (a mark being worth  
 13s. 4d).

508 *Paul's]* St. Paul's Cathedral.

521 *ob.]* abbreviation of the Latin "obolus," commonly used in England  
 as a symbol for a half-penny.



## THE FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV ACT II

---

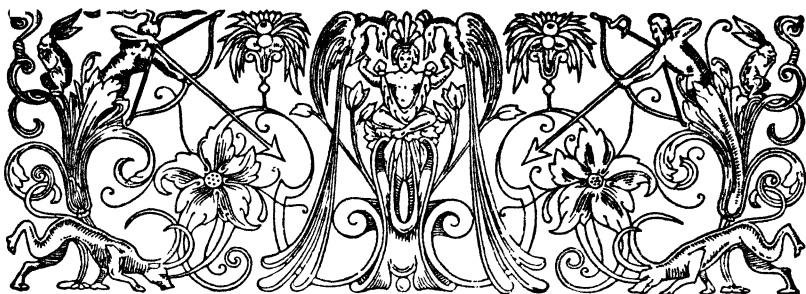
PRINCE. O monstrous ! but one half-pennyworth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack ! What there is else, keep close ; we 'll read it at more advantage ; there let him sleep till day. I 'll to the court in the morning. We must all to the wars, and thy place shall be honourable. I 'll procure this fat rogue a charge of foot ; and I know his death will be a march of twelve-score. The money shall be paid back again with advantage. Be with me betimes in the morning ; and so, good morrow, Peto.

530

PETO. Good morrow, good my lord. [Exeunt.]

527 *a charge of foot*] command of a company of foot-soldiers.

527-528 *his death . . . twelve-score*] he will die if he march a distance of twelve-score yards.

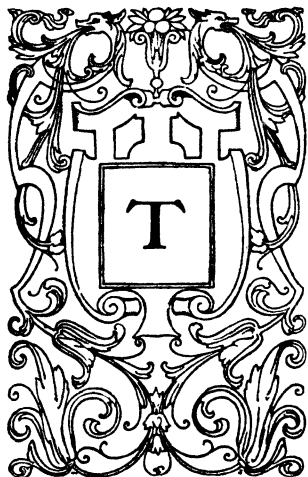


## ACT THIRD—SCENE I—BANGOR

### THE ARCHDEACON'S HOUSE

*Enter* HOTSPUR, WORCESTER, MORTIMER, and GLENDOWER

MORTIMER



THESE PROMISES ARE  
fair, the parties sure,  
And our induction full of pros-  
perous hope.

HOT. Lord Mortimer, and  
cousin Glendower,  
Will you sit down ?  
And uncle Worcester : a plague  
upon it !  
I have forgot the map.

GLEND. No, here it is.  
Sit, cousin Percy ; sit, good cousin  
Hotspur.

For by that name as oft as Lancaster  
Doth speak of you, his cheek looks pale, and with  
A rising sigh he wisheth you in heaven.

10

2 *induction*] opening scene, first move.

[ 77 ]

HOT. And you in hell, as oft as he hears Owen Glendower spoke of.

GLEND. I cannot blame him : at my nativity  
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,  
Of burning cressets ; and at my birth  
The frame and huge foundation of the earth  
Shaked like a coward.

HOT. Why, so it would have done at the same season,  
if your mother's cat had but kittened, though yourself  
had never been born.

20

GLEND. I say the earth did shake when I was born.

HOT. And I say the earth was not of my mind,  
If you suppose as fearing you it shook.

GLEND. The heavens were all on fire, the earth did  
tremble.

HOT. O, then the earth shook to see the heavens on  
fire,

And not in fear of your nativity.

Diseased nature oftentimes breaks forth

In strange eruptions ; oft the teeming earth

Is with a kind of colic pinch'd and vex'd

By the imprisoning of unruly wind

30

Within her womb ; which, for enlargement striving,

Shakes the old beldam earth and topples down

Steeple and moss-grown towers. At your birth

15 *cressets*] open bowls, holding burning fluid ; usually fixed on poles.

32 *old beldam earth*] old mother earth. "Beldam" is here used without any scornful significance. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 1046-1047: "As when the wind, imprison'd in the ground, Struggling for passage, earth's foundation shakes."

Our grandam earth, having this distemperature,  
In passion shook.

GLEND. Cousin, of many men  
I do not bear these crossings. Give me leave  
To tell you once again that at my birth  
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,  
The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds  
Were strangely clamorous to the frightened fields  
These signs have mark'd me extraordinary ;  
And all the courses of my life do show  
I am not in the roll of common men.  
Where is he living, clipp'd in with the sea  
That chides the banks of England, Scotland, Wales,  
Which calls me pupil, or hath read to me ?  
And bring him out that is but woman's son  
Can trace me in the tedious ways of art,  
And hold me pace in deep experiments.

40

HOT. I think there's no man speaks better Welsh, so  
I'll to dinner.

MORT. Peace, cousin Percy ; you will make him  
mad.

GLEND. I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

HOT. Why, so can I, or so can any man ;  
But will they come when you do call for them ?

34 *distemperature*] disorder. Cf. V, i, 3, *infra*.

40 *Were strangely clamorous to*] Addressed strange cries to.

46 *Which . . . to me*] Who calls me pupil, or hath instructed me.

47-49 *And bring him out . . . experiments*] And produce any one who,  
being mortal (not being of supernatural birth), can follow me in  
tedious ways of learning and keep pace with me in deep experiments.

GLEND. Why, I can teach you, cousin, to command  
The devil.

HOT. And I can teach thee, coz, to shame the devil  
By telling truth: tell truth, and shame the devil.  
If thou have power to raise him, bring him hither, 60  
And I 'll be sworn I have power to shame him hence.  
O, while you live, tell truth, and shame the devil!

MORT. Come, come, no more of this unprofitable chat.

GLEND. Three times hath Henry Bolingbroke made  
head  
Against my power; thrice from the banks of Wye  
And sandy-bottom'd Severn have I sent him  
Bootless home and weather-beaten back.

HOT. Home without boots, and in foul weather too!  
How 'scapes he agues, in the devil's name?

GLEND. Come, here's the map: shall we divide our  
right 70  
According to our threefold order ta'en?

MORT. The archdeacon hath divided it  
Into three limits very equally:  
England, from Trent and Severn hitherto,  
By south and east is to my part assign'd:  
All westward, Wales beyond the Severn shore,  
And all the fertile land within that bound,

64-65 *made head Against*] collected forces against, seriously menaced.

67-68 *Bootless . . . without boots*] There is a very like pun in II, i, 79,  
*supra*.

71 *our threefold order ta'en*] our agreement made for a triple division.

74 *hitherto*] to this point; here an adverb of place. Hotspur is pointing  
to a map.

To Owen Glendower : and, dear coz, to you  
 The remnant northward, lying off from Trent.  
 And our indentures tripartite are drawn ; 80  
 Which being sealed interchangeably,  
 A business that this night may execute,  
 To-morrow, cousin Percy, you and I  
 And my good Lord of Worcester will set forth  
 To meet your father and the Scottish power,  
 As is appointed us, at Shrewsbury.  
 My father Glendower is not ready yet,  
 Nor shall we need his help these fourteen days.  
 Within that space you may have drawn together  
 Your tenants, friends, and neighbouring gentlemen. 90

GLEND. A shorter time shall send me to you, lords :  
 And in my conduct shall your ladies come ;  
 From whom you now must steal and take no leave,  
 For there will be a world of water shed  
 Upon the parting of your wives and you.

HOT. Methinks my moiety, north from Burton here,  
 In quantity equals not one of yours :  
 See how this river comes me cranking in,  
 And cuts me from the best of all my land  
 A huge half-moon, a monstrous cantle out, 100

80-81 *our indentures tripartite . . . interchangeably*] three copies have  
 been made of our covenant; each one of which being sealed and  
 signed by all of the three parties.

96 *moiety*] share, portion.

98 *comes me cranking in*] comes meandering and twisting about my land;  
 "me" is the ethic dative.

100 *cantle*] corner, bit (of anything).

I'll have the current in this place damm'd up ;  
And here the smug and silver Trent shall run  
In a new channel, fair and evenly ;  
It shall not wind with such a deep indent,  
To rob me of so rich a bottom here.

GLEND. Not wind ? it shall, it must ; you see it doth.

MORT. Yea, but  
Mark how he bears his course, and runs me up  
With like advantage on the other side ;  
Gelding the opposed continent as much  
As on the other side it takes from you.

110

WOR. Yea, but a little charge will trench him here,  
And on this north side win this cape of land ;  
And then he runs straight and even.

HOT. I'll have it so : a little charge will do it.

GLEND. I'll not have it alter'd.

HOT.

Will not you ?

GLEND. No, nor you shall not.

HOT.

Who shall say me nay ?

GLEND. Why, that will I.

HOT. Let me not understand you, then ; speak it in Welsh.

120

102 *smug*] smooth.

104 *indent*] indentation, inroad.

105 *bottom*] a level piece of land in a valley.

110 *Gelding . . . continent*] Lopping off the opposite bank of the river.

112 *a little charge . . . here*] a little expense will make a new channel for the river here.

113 *cape of land*] projecting land.

GLEND. I can speak English, lord, as well as you ;  
 For I was train'd up in the English court ;  
 Where, being but young, I framed to the harp  
 Many an English ditty lovely well,  
 And gave the tongue a helpful ornament,  
 A virtue that was never seen in you.

HOT. Marry,  
 And I am glad of it with all my heart :  
 I had rather be a kitten and cry mew  
 Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers ; 130  
 I had rather hear a brazen canstick turn'd,  
 Or a dry wheel grate on the axle-tree ;  
 And that would set my teeth nothing on edge,  
 Nothing so much as mincing poetry :  
 'T is like the forced gait of a shuffling nag.

GLEND. Come, you shall have 'Trent turn'd.

HOT. I do not care : I 'll give thrice so much land  
 To any well-deserving friend ;  
 But in the way of bargain, mark ye me,  
 I 'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair. 140  
 Are the indentures drawn ? shall we be gone ?

GLEND. The moon shines fair ; you may away by  
 night :

125 *the tongue*] the English language.

131 *canstick*] Thus the Quartos. The Folios read *candlestick*, the more ordinary form of the same word.

*turn'd*] *sc.* on the brass worker's lathe.

134 *mincing*] affected.

135 '*T is . . . nag*] See note on *As you like it*, III, ii, 103: "the very false gallop of verses."

140 *cavil on*] haggle over.



I'll haste the writer, and withal  
 Break with your wives of your departure hence :  
 I am afraid my daughter will run mad,  
 So much she doteth on her Mortimer. [Exit.

MORT. Fie, cousin Percy! how you cross my  
 father!

HOT. I cannot choose: sometime he angers me  
 With telling me of the moldwarp and the ant,  
 Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies, 150  
 And of a dragon and a finless fish,  
 A clip-wing'd griffin and a moulten raven,  
 A couching lion and a ramping cat,  
 And such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff  
 As puts me from my faith. I tell you what, —  
 He held me last night at least nine hours  
 In reckoning up the several devils' names  
 That were his lackeys: I cried "hum," and "well,  
 go to,"

But mark'd him not a word. O, he is as tedious  
 As a tired horse, a railing wife; 160  
 Worse than a smoky house: I had rather live  
 With cheese and garlic in a windmill, far,

143 [*the writer*] the copyist of the agreements.

144 *Break with*] Communicate to.

149-153 of the *moldwarp* . . . *cat*] Hotspur makes impatient and scornfully inexact reference to an old prophecy attributed to Merlin in which Glendower put faith, to the effect that Henry IV, who was likened by Merlin to "a moldwarp" (*i. e.*, a mole), should lose his realm to a band of three assailants, viz., a dragon, a lion, and a wolf.

153 *couching* . . . *ramping*] lying down . . . rearing; heraldic terms.

154 *skimble-skamble stuff*] random nonsense.

Than feed on cates and have him talk to me  
In any summer-house in Christendom.

MORT. In faith, he is a worthy gentleman,  
Exceedingly well read, and profited  
In strange concealments; valiant as a lion,  
And wondrous affable, and as bountiful  
As mines of India. Shall I tell you, cousin?  
He holds your temper in a high respect, 170  
And curbs himself even of his natural scope  
When you come 'cross his humour; faith, he does:  
I warrant you, that man is not alive  
Might so have tempted him as you have done,  
Without the taste of danger and reproof:  
But do not use it oft, let me entreat you.

WOR. In faith, my lord, you are too wilful-blame;  
And since your coming hither have done enough  
To put him quite beside his patience.  
You must needs learn, lord, to amend this fault: 180  
Though sometimes it show greatness, courage, blood,—  
And that's the dearest grace it renders you,—  
Yet oftentimes it doth present harsh rage,  
Defect of manners, want of government,  
Pride, haughtiness, opinion and disdain:  
The least of which haunting a nobleman

163 *cates*] dainties, delicacies.

164 *summer-house*] summer residence, pleasant villa.

166-167 *profited . . . concealments*] skilled in wonderful secrets.

171 *curbs . . . scope*] restrains his natural temper.

177 *wilful-blame*] wilfully to blame.

184 *government*] self-control.

185 *opinion*] *sc.* of oneself, self-conceit.

Loseth men's hearts, and leaves behind a stain  
 Upon the beauty of all parts besides,  
 Beguiling them of commendation.

HOT. Well, I am school'd: good manners be your  
 speed!

190

Here come our wives, and let us take our leave.

*Re-enter GLENDOWER with the ladies*

MORT. This is the deadly spite that angers me;  
 My wife can speak no English, I no Welsh.

GLEND. My daughter weeps: she will not part with  
 you;

She'll be a soldier too, she'll to the wars.

MORT. Good father, tell her that she and my aunt  
 Percy

Shall follow in your conduct speedily.

*[Glendower speaks to her in Welsh, and she answers  
 him in the same.]*

GLEND. She is desperate here; a peevish self-will'd  
 harlotry, one that no persuasion can do good upon.

*[The lady speaks in Welsh.]*

MORT. I understand thy looks: that pretty Welsh 200  
 Which thou pour'st down from these swelling heavens

187 *Loseth men's hearts*] Forfeitheth men's affections.

196 *my aunt Percy*] Mortimer was Lady Percy's brother. For Shakespeare's confusions respecting him see I, i, 38, *supra*, and note.

199 *harlotry*] Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, IV, ii, 14, where Capulet, speaking of his daughter, uses Glendower's precise words: "A peevish self-will'd *harlotry* it is." Harlotry means nothing more in these passages than minx or hussy. Cf. II, iv, 384, *supra*, and note.

201 *swelling heavens*] eyes filling with tears.

I am too perfect in ; and, but for shame,  
In such a parley should I answer thee.

[*The lady speaks again in Welsh.*]

I understand thy kisses and thou mine,  
And that 's a feeling disputation :  
But I will never be a truant, love,  
Till I have learn'd thy language ; for thy tongue  
Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penn'd,  
Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bower,  
With ravishing division, to her lute.

210

GLEND. Nay, if you melt, then will she run mad.

[*The lady speaks again in Welsh.*]

MORT. O, I am ignorance itself in this !

GLEND. She bids you on the wanton rushes lay you  
down

And rest your gentle head upon her lap,  
And she will sing the song that pleaseth you,  
And on your eyelids crown the god of sleep,  
Charming your blood with pleasing heaviness,  
Making such difference 'twixt wake and sleep  
As is the difference betwixt day and night

205 *a feeling disputation*] a theme of sensibility.

210 *division*] variations on a melody.

213 *wanton rushes*] The floors in Shakespeare's day were commonly strewn  
with rushes in lieu of carpets.

216 *crown*] install as master.

218-219 *Making . . . night*] Lady Mortimer promises her husband the  
tranquillity of light refreshing slumber which is removed both from  
wakefulness and heavy sleep, and resembles the calm season pre-  
ceding the dawn.

The hour before the heavenly-harness'd team 220  
 Begins his golden progress in the east.

MORT. With all my heart I'll sit and hear her sing :  
 By that time will our book, I think, be drawn.

GLEND. Do so ;  
 And those musicians that shall play to you  
 Hang in the air a thousand leagues from hence,  
 And straight they shall be here : sit, and attend.

HOT. Come, Kate, thou art perfect in lying down :  
 come, quick, quick, that I may lay my head in thy lap. 229

LADY P. Go, ye giddy goose. [The music plays.]

HOT. Now I perceive the devil understands Welsh ;  
 And 't is no marvel he is so humorous.  
 By 'r lady, he is a good musician.

LADY P. Then should you be nothing but musical,  
 for you are altogether governed by humours. Lie still,  
 ye thief, and hear the lady sing in Welsh.

HOT. I had rather hear Lady, my brach, howl in Irish.

LADY P. Wouldst thou have thy head broken ?

HOT. No.

LADY P. Then be still. 240

HOT. Neither ; 't is a woman's fault.

223 *our book . . . be drawn*] our agreements be drawn out ; cf. line 265, *infra*.

228 *Kate*] See II, iii, 33, *supra*, and note.

232 *so humorous*] so varied in his moods, so capricious.

237 *Lady, my brach*] An extravagant euphemism for "my bitch hound."

241 *'t is a woman's fault*] an ironical admission that the speaker is subject to the feminine failing of irresolution. Hotspur admits that he has no desire to talk, whereby he will expose himself to the risk of having his head broken, nor does he wish to keep silence.

LADY P. Now God help thee !

HOT. To the Welsh lady's bed.

LADY P. What 's that ?

HOT. Peace ! she sings.

[*Here the lady sings a Welsh song.*]

HOT. Come, Kate, I'll have your song too.

LADY P. Not mine, in good sooth.

HOT. Not yours, in good sooth ! Heart ! you swear like a comfit-maker's wife. "Not you, in good sooth," and "as true as I live," and "as God shall mend me," and "as sure as day,"

251

And givest such sarcenet surety for thy oaths,  
As if thou never walk'st further than Finsbury.  
Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art,  
A good mouth-filling oath, and leave "in sooth,"  
And such protest of pepper-gingerbread,  
To velvet-guards and Sunday-citizens.  
Come, sing.

LADY P. I will not sing.

259

249 *a comfit-maker's wife*] a confectioner's wife, wife of a maker of sweet-meats, whose talk might be assumed to be characterized by sugary tameness.

250 "*as God shall mend me*" ] "as hope of amending my life is in God."

252 *sarcenet surety*] flimsy surety; sarcenet was a soft gauzy kind of silk.

253 *Finsbury*] In Shakespeare's day the district was best known for its open fields, in which London citizens and their wives were wont to promenade.

256 *pepper-gingerbread*] spiced gingerbread.

257 *velvet-guards and Sunday-citizens*] wearers of dresses trimmed with velvet, and citizens clothed in their Sunday best.

HOT. 'T is the next way to turn tailor, or be red-breast teacher. An the indentures be drawn, I'll away within these two hours; and so, come in when ye will.

[*Exit.*]

GLEND. Come, come, Lord Mortimer; you are as slow As hot Lord Percy is on fire to go.  
By this our book is drawn; we'll but seal,  
And then to horse immediately.

MORT.

With all my heart.

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II — LONDON

### THE PALACE

*Enter the KING, PRINCE OF WALES, and others*

KING. Lords, give us leave; the Prince of Wales and I Must have some private conference: but be near at hand, For we shall presently have need of you. [*Exeunt Lords.*]  
I know not whether God will have it so,  
For some displeasing service I have done,  
That, in his secret doom, out of my blood

260 'T is the next . . . tailor] To sing is the nearest way to come down to the level of the tailor, who was proverbially famous for his gift of song.

260-261 red-breast teacher] one who trains birds (probably bullfinches) to sing. Robin redbreasts were rarely known to sing.

265 By this . . . drawn] By this time our agreement is drawn up or engrossed; cf. line 223, *supra*.

1 give us leave] withdraw.

5 displeasing service] displeasing act.

6 blood] kindred or progeny.

He'll breed revengement and a scourge for me ;  
But thou dost in thy passages of life  
Make me believe that thou art only mark'd  
For the hot vengeance and the rod of heaven 10  
To punish my mistreadings. Tell me else,  
Could such inordinate and low desires,  
Such poor, such bare, such lewd, such mean attempts,  
Such barren pleasures, rude society,  
As thou art match'd withal and grafted to,  
Accompany the greatness of thy blood,  
And hold their level with thy princely heart ?

PRINCE. So please your majesty, I would I could  
Quit all offences with as clear excuse  
As well as I am doubtless I can purge 20  
Myself of many I am charged withal :  
Yet such extenuation let me beg,  
As, in reproof of many tales devised,  
Which oft the ear of greatness needs must hear,  
By smiling pick-thanks and base newsmongers,  
I may, for some things true, wherein my youth  
Hath faulty wander'd and irregular,  
Find pardon on my true submission.

---

11 *mistreadings*] transgressions.

13 *such lewd, such mean attempts*] such wicked, depraved, such unworthy undertakings or pursuits.

15 *art match'd withal*] engagest in as an equal.

20 *doubtless*] confident.

23 *in reproof of*] in consideration of my refuting; cf. I, ii, 183, *supra*.

25 *pick-thanks . . . newsmongers*] officious parasites and low-minded gossips. Holinshed employs the word "pick-thanks" in the corresponding passage.



KING. God pardon thee ! yet let me wonder, Harry,  
 At thy affections, which do hold a wing 30  
 Quite from the flight of all thy ancestors.  
 Thy place in council thou hast rudely lost,  
 Which by thy younger brother is supplied,  
 And art almost an alien to the hearts  
 Of all the court and princes of my blood :  
 The hope and expectation of thy time  
 Is ruin'd, and the soul of every man  
 Prophetically doth forethink thy fall.  
 Had I so lavish of my presence been,  
 So common-hackney'd in the eyes of men, 40  
 So stale and cheap to vulgar company,  
 Opinion, that did help me to the crown,  
 Had still kept loyal to possession,  
 And left me in reputeless banishment,  
 A fellow of no mark nor likelihood.  
 By being seldom seen, I could not stir  
 But like a comet I was wonder'd at ;  
 That men would tell their children " This is he ;"  
 Others would say " Where, which is Bolingbroke ?"  
 And then I stole all courtesy from heaven, 50

30 *affections*] inclinations.

32 *Thy place . . . lost*] "Rudely" means "by rude or riotous behaviour."

As a matter of history, it was not till eight years after the date of events noticed in this play that Prince Henry was removed from the privy council.

42 *Opinion*] Public opinion.

43 *loyal to possession*] true to him that then possessed the throne.

50 *I stole . . . heaven*] I acquired that manner of benignant courtesy which one associates with the gentle grace of heavenly beings.

And dress'd myself in such humility  
 That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,  
 Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths,  
 Even in the presence of the crowned king.  
 Thus did I keep my person fresh and new ;  
 My presence, like a robe pontifical  
 Ne'er seen but wonder'd at : and so my state,  
 Seldom but sumptuous, showed like a feast,  
 And wan by rareness such solemnity.  
 The skipping king, he ambled up and down,  
 With shallow jesters and rash bavin wits,  
 Soon kindled and soon burnt ; carded his state,  
 Mingled his royalty with capering fools,  
 Had his great name profaned with their scorns,  
 And gave his countenance, against his name,  
 To laugh at gibing boys, and stand the push  
 Of every beardless vain comparative,  
 Grew a companion to the common streets,

60

59 *wan*] Thus the Quartos. The Folios substitute the more ordinary form *won*.

60 *skipping*] skittish.

61 *bavin wits*] "Bavin" is brushwood, "soon kindled and soon burnt." The meaning is, wits of Richard II's circle indulged in flashes of irresponsible merriment.

62 *carded his state*] blended his dignified position (with ignominious behaviour). "Card" was the technical term for blending wines.

65 *against his name*] to the injury of his reputation.

66-67 *stand the push . . . comparative*] suffered himself to be the butt of every insolent youth whose wit took the form of making satirical comparisons and similes. For this use of "comparative" see note on I, ii, 78, and cf. II, iv, 242, *supra*.

Enfeoff'd himself to popularity;  
That, being daily swallow'd by men's eyes, 70  
They surfeited with honey and began  
To loathe the taste of sweetness, whereof a little  
More than a little is by much too much.  
So when he had occasion to be seen,  
He was but as the cuckoo is in June,  
Heard, not regarded; seen, but with such eyes  
As, sick and blunted with community,  
Afford no extraordinary gaze,  
Such as is bent on sun-like majesty  
When it shines seldom in admiring eyes; 80  
But rather drowsed and hung their eyelids down,  
Slept in his face and render'd such aspect  
As cloudy men use to their adversaries,  
Being with his presence glutted, gorged and full.  
And in that very line, Harry, standest thou;  
For thou hast lost thy princely privilege  
With vile participation: not an eye  
But is a-weary of thy common sight,  
Save mine, which hath desired to see thee more;  
Which now doth that I would not have it do, 90  
Make blind itself with foolish tenderness.

PRINCE. I shall hereafter, my thrice gracious lord,  
Be more myself.

69 *Enfeoff'd* . . . *popularity*] Gave himself wholly up to intercourse with plebeians. "To enfeof" was properly "to convey property absolutely, in fee simple."

77 *community*] familiarity.

83 *cloudy*] sullen, morose.

87 *vile participation*] low companionship or society.

KING. For all the world  
 As thou art to this hour was Richard then  
 When I from France set foot at Ravenspurgh,  
 And even as I was then is Percy now.  
 Now, by my sceptre and my soul to boot,  
 He hath more worthy interest to the state  
 Than thou the shadow of succession;  
 For of no right, nor colour like to right, 100  
 He doth fill fields with harness in the realm,  
 Turns head against the lion's armed jaws,  
 And, being no more in debt to years than thou,  
 Leads ancient lords and reverend bishops on  
 To bloody battles and to bruising arms.  
 What never-dying honour hath he got  
 Against renowned Douglas! whose high deeds,  
 Whose hot incursions and great name in arms  
 Holds from all soldiers chief majority  
 And military title capital 110  
 Through all the kingdoms that acknowledge Christ:  
 Thrice hath this Hotspur, Mars in swathing clothes,  
 This infant warrior, in his enterprizes

98 *interest to the state*] title to the throne.

99 *the shadow of succession*] the heir apparent.

101 *harness*] properly "armour;" here "armed warriors."

103 *And, being . . . years*] As a matter of history Hotspur was twenty years older than the Prince.

109-110 *chief majority . . . capital*] pre-eminence and chief or principal military renown.

112 *swathing clothes*] a baby's long clothes. Thus the first three Quartos. Other early editions read *swathing clothes*. The modern form is "swaddling clothes."

Discomfited great Douglas, ta'en him once,  
Enlarged him and made a friend of him,  
To fill the mouth of deep defiance up,  
And shake the peace and safety of our throne.  
And what say you to this? Percy, Northumberland,  
The Archbishop's grace of York, Douglas, Mortimer,  
Capitulate against us and are up. 120  
But wherefore do I tell these news to thee?  
Why, Harry, do I tell thee of my foes,  
Which art my near'st and dearest enemy?  
Thou that art like enough, through vassal fear  
Base inclination and the start of spleen,  
To fight against me under Percy's pay,  
To dog his heels and curtsy at his frowns,  
To show how much thou art degenerate.

PRINCE. Do not think so; you shall not find it  
so:

And God forgive them that so much have sway'd 130  
Your majesty's good thoughts away from me!  
I will redeem all this on Percy's head,  
And in the closing of some glorious day  
Be bold to tell you that I am your son;  
When I will wear a garment all of blood,  
And stain my favours in a bloody mask,  
Which, wash'd away, shall scour my shame with it:

120 *Capitulate*] Draw up articles of agreement, form a league.

125 *start of spleen*] impulse of anger.

136 *favours*] features. Though the word in the singular is constantly used for "face," the plural is exceptional. The succeeding word "mask" leaves no doubt of the meaning.

And that shall be the day, whene'er it lights,  
That this same child of honour and renown,  
This gallant Hotspur, this all-praised knight, 140  
And your unthought-of Harry chance to meet.  
For every honour sitting on his helm,  
Would they were multitudes, and on my head  
My shames redoubled ! for the time will come,  
That I shall make this northern youth exchange  
His glorious deeds for my indignities.  
Percy is but my factor, good my lord,  
To engross up glorious deeds on my behalf ;  
And I will call him to so strict account,  
That he shall render every glory up, 150  
Yea, even the slightest worship of his time,  
Or I will tear the reckoning from his heart.  
This, in the name of God, I promise here :  
The which if He be pleased I shall perform,  
I do beseech your majesty may salve  
The long-grown wounds of my intemperance :  
If not, the end of life cancels all bands ;  
And I will die a hundred thousand deaths  
Ere break the smallest parcel of this vow.

KING. A hundred thousand rebels die in this : 160  
Thou shalt have charge and sovereign trust herein.

---

148 *engross up*] buy up.

151 *the slightest . . . time*] the smallest honour that has been paid him in his day.

157 *bands*] bonds, obligations.

159 *parcel*] item, jot.

161 *charge*] a responsible commission.

THE FIRST PART OF      ACT III

*Enter BLUNT*

How now, good Blunt? thy looks are full of speed.

BLUNT. So hath the business that I come to speak of.  
Lord Mortimer of Scotland hath sent word  
That Douglas and the English rebels met  
The eleventh of this month at Shrewsbury:  
A mighty and a fearful head they are,  
If promises be kept on every hand,  
As ever offer'd foul play in a state.

KING. The Earl of Westmoreland set forth to-day;  
With him my son, Lord John of Lancaster;      171  
For this advertisement is five days old:  
On Wednesday next, Harry, you shall set forward;  
On Thursday we ourselves will march: our meeting  
Is Bridgenorth: and, Harry, you shall march  
Through Gloucestershire; by which account,  
Our business valued, some twelve days hence  
Our general forces at Bridgenorth shall meet.  
Our hands are full of business: let's away;  
Advantage feeds him fat, while men delay.      [*Exeunt.* 180

164 *Lord Mortimer of Scotland*] A curious confusion on Shakespeare's part. There was no Scottish Lord Mortimer, but there was a Scottish Earldom of March, held at this period by George Dunbar, whom Holinshed merely called "the Scot, the Earl of March." He was a zealous ally of England at this period. See II, iii, 1, *supra*, and note. Shakespeare hastily gave the Scottish Earl of March the family name of the English Earl of March, which was Mortimer.

167 *head*] rebel army.

172 *advertisement*] intelligence, information.

177 *Our business valued*] Reckoning the time needed for our arrangements.

180 *feeds him*] feeds himself, grows.

SCENE III — THE BOAR'S-HEAD TAVERN IN  
EASTCHEAP*Enter FALSTAFF and BARDOLPH*

FAL. Bardolph, am I not fallen away vilely since this last action? do I not bate? do I not dwindle? Why, my skin hangs about me like an old lady's loose gown; I am withered like an old apple-john. Well, I'll repent, and that suddenly, while I am in some liking; I shall be out of heart shortly, and then I shall have no strength to repent. An I have not forgotten what the inside of a church is made of, I am a peppercorn, a brewer's horse: the inside of a church! Company, villanous company, hath been the spoil of me. 10

BARD. Sir John, you are so fretful, you cannot live long.

FAL. Why, there is it: come sing me a bawdy song; make me merry. I was as virtuously given as a gentleman need to be; virtuous enough; swore little; diced not above seven times a week; went to a bawdy-house not above once in a quarter — of an hour; paid money that I borrowed, three or four times; lived well, and in

4 *apple-john*] apple, which kept long though the skin shrivelled quickly.

A like comparison is made by Falstaff in *2 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 2.

5 *in some liking*] in fairly good condition.

8 *peppercorn . . . horse*] Falstaff compares himself ironically to a thing of such insignificant size as the peppercorn, or to an animal so lank and bony as a brewer's or a malt horse was then commonly reputed to be through overwork. See *Com. of Errors*, III, i, 32.



good compass: and now I live out of all order, out of all compass.

20

BARD. Why, you are so fat, Sir John, that you must needs be out of all compass, out of all reasonable compass, Sir John.

FAL. Do thou amend thy face, and I'll amend my life: thou art our admiral, thou bearest the lantern in the poop, but 't is in the nose of thee; thou art the Knight of the Burning Lamp.

BARD. Why, Sir John, my face does you no harm.

FAL. No, I'll be sworn; I make as good use of it as many a man doth of a Death's-head or a memento mori: 30 I never see thy face but I think upon hell-fire, and Dives that lived in purple; for there he is in his robes, burning, burning. If thou wert any way given to virtue, I would swear by thy face; my oath should be, "By this fire, that's God's angel:" but thou art altogether given over; and wert indeed, but for the light in thy face, the son of utter darkness. When thou rannest up Gadshill in the night to catch my horse, if I did not think thou hadst

25-26 *admiral . . . poop*] the admiral's ship, the leading ship of a squadron, which at night carried a lantern at the stern or poop, which set the course for the ships which followed.

27 *Knight of the Burning Lamp*] A satiric hint at the ordinary titles of heroes of popular romances, which Beaumont and Fletcher developed in their play of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*.

30 *memento mori*] a common term for a skull and crossbones.

34-35 "*By this fire . . . angel*" ] Thus the Quartos. The Folios omit *that's God's angel*. Cf. *Exodus*, iii, 2: "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire."

been an ignis fatuus or a ball of wildfire, there's no purchase in money. O, thou art a perpetual triumph, an 40 everlasting bonfire-light! Thou hast saved me a thousand marks in links and torches, walking with thee in the night betwixt tavern and tavern: but the sack that thou hast drunk me would have bought me lights as good cheap at the dearest chandler's in Europe. I have maintained that salamander of yours with fire any time this two and thirty years; God reward me for it!

BARD. 'Sblood, I would my face were in your belly!

FAL. God-a-mercy! so should I be sure to be heart-burned.

50

*Enter Hostess*

How now, Dame Partlet the hen! have you inquired yet who picked my pocket?

HOST. Why, Sir John, what do you think, Sir John? do you think I keep thieves in my house? I have searched, I have inquired, so has my husband, man by man, boy by boy, servant by servant: the tithe of a hair was never lost in my house before.

FAL. Ye lie, hostess: Bardolph was shaved, and lost many a hair; and I'll be sworn my pocket was picked. Go to, you are a woman, go.

60

HOST. Who, I? no; I defy thee: God's light, I was never called so in mine own house before.

39 *an ignis fatuus*] a will o' the wisp.

44-45 *as good cheap*] quite as cheaply.

51 *Dame Partlet*] The name of the hen in the medieval story of Reynard the Fox.

FAL. Go to, I know you well enough.

HOST. No, Sir John; you do not know me, Sir John. I know you, Sir John: you owe me money, Sir John; and now you pick a quarrel to beguile me of it: I bought you a dozen of shirts to your back.

FAL. Dowlas, filthy dowlas: I have given them away to bakers' wives, and they have made bolters of them.

HOST. Now, as I am a true woman, holland of eight 70 shillings an ell. You owe money here besides, Sir John, for your diet and by-drinkings, and money lent you, four and twenty pound.

FAL. He had his part of it; let him pay.

HOST. He? alas, he is poor: he hath nothing.

FAL. How! poor? look upon his face; what call you rich? let them coin his nose, let them coin his cheeks: I'll not pay a denier. What, will you make a younker of me? shall I not take mine ease in mine inn but I shall have my pocket picked? I have lost a seal-ring of 80 my grandfather's worth forty mark.

HOST. O Jesu, I have heard the prince tell him, I know not how oft, that that ring was copper!

FAL. How! the prince is a Jack, a sneak-cup: 'sblood,

68 *Dowlas*] The coarsest kind of linen.

69 *bolters*] cloth or hair sieves for sifting meal or flour.

72 *by-drinkings*] drinkings between meals.

78 *a denier*] a penny, a stiver, from Latin "denarius."

*younker*] greenhorn.

79 *shall I . . . inn*] a proverbial expression. Cf. John Heywood's *Three Hundred Epigrammes upon Proverbs*, No. 26: "Thou takest *thine ease in thine inn*."

84 *sneak-cup*] one who dodges liquor, who slyly avoids drinking his share.

an he were here, I would cudgel him like a dog, if he would say so.

*Enter the PRINCE and PETO, marching, and FALSTAFF meets them playing on his truncheon like a fife*

How now, lad! is the wind in that door, i' faith? must we all march?

BARD. Yea, two and two. Newgate fashion.

HOST. My lord, I pray you, hear me. 90

PRINCE. What sayest thou, Mistress Quickly? How doth thy husband? I love him well; he is an honest man.

HOST. Good my lord, hear me.

FAL. Prithce, let her alone, and list to me.

PRINCE. What sayest thou, Jack?

FAL. The other night I fell asleep here behind the arras, and had my pocket picked: this house is turned bawdy-house; they pick pockets.

PRINCE. What didst thou lose, Jack? 100

FAL. Wilt thou believe me, Hal? three or four bonds of forty pound a-piece, and a seal-ring of my grandfather's.

PRINCE. A trifle, some eight-penny matter.

HOST. So I told him, my lord; and I said I heard your grace say so: and, my lord, he speaks most vilely of you, like a foul-mouthed man as he is; and said he would cudgel you.

89 *Newgate fashion*] Prisoners were conducted through the street from the prison at Newgate to the scaffold handcuffed in pairs.

PRINCE. What! he did not?

HOST. There's neither faith, truth, nor womanhood  
in me else. 111

FAL. There's no more faith in thee than in a stewed  
prune; nor no more truth in thee than in a drawn fox;  
and for womanhood, Maid Marian may be the deputy's  
wife of the ward to thee. Go, you thing, go.

HOST. Say, what thing? what thing?

FAL. What thing! why, a thing to thank God on.

HOST. I am no thing to thank God on, I would thou  
shouldst know it; I am an honest man's wife: and,  
setting thy knighthood aside, thou art a knave to call  
me so. 121

FAL. Setting thy womanhood aside, thou art a beast  
to say otherwise.

HOST. Say, what beast, thou knave, thou?

FAL. What beast! why, an otter.

PRINCE. An otter, Sir John! why an otter?

FAL. Why, she's neither fish nor flesh; a man knows  
not where to have her. 128

112-113 *a stewed prune*] a loose woman; the thing eaten is put for the eater. According to Elizabethan dramatists stewed prunes formed a customary diet in houses of ill-fame.

113 *a drawn fox*] a fox drawn from cover, and seeking by artifice to elude his pursuers.

114 *Maid Marian*] A character in the morris dances in attendance on Robin Hood. In Shakespeare's day the part was usually filled by a man, who indulged in much clownish and indelicate buffoonery.

114-115 *the deputy's wife of the ward to thee*] a woman of standing and respectability compared to thee. "The deputy of the ward" was a common councilman of repute, who exercised police authority.

HOST. Thou art an unjust man in saying so: thou or any man knows where to have me, thou knave, thou!

PRINCE. Thou sayest true, hostess; and he slanders thee most grossly.

HOST. So he doth you, my lord; and said this other day you ought him a thousand pound.

PRINCE. Sirrah, do I owe you a thousand pound?

FAL. A thousand pound. Hal! a million: thy love is worth a million: thou owest me thy love.

HOST. Nay, my lord, he called you Jack, and said he would cudgel you.

FAL. Did I, Bardolph?

140

BARD. Indeed, Sir John, you said so.

FAL. Yea, if he said my ring was copper.

PRINCE. I say 'tis copper: darest thou be as good as thy word now?

FAL. Why, Hal, thou knowest, as thou art but man, I dare: but as thou art prince, I fear thee as I fear the roaring of the lion's whelp.

PRINCE. And why not as the lion?

FAL. The king himself is to be feared as the lion; dost thou think I'll fear thee as I fear thy father? nay, an I do, I pray God my girdle break.

151

PRINCE. O, if it should, how would thy guts fall about thy knees! But, sirrah, there's no room for faith, truth, nor honesty in this bosom of thine; it is all filled

134 *ought*] owed.

151 *I pray God my girdle break*] An allusion to a familiar proverb "Ungirt, unblest." The purse was usually attached to the girdle, so that there was risk of loss of money from the breaking of the girdle.

up with guts and midriff. Charge an honest woman with picking thy pocket! why, thou whoreson, impudent, embossed rascal, if there were anything in thy pocket but tavern-reckonings, memorandums of bawdy-houses, and one poor penny-worth of sugar-candy to make thee long-winded, if thy pocket were enriched with any other injuries but these, I am a villain: and yet you will stand to it; you will not pocket up wrong: art thou not ashamed?

163

FAL. Dost thou hear, Hal? thou knowest in the state of innocency Adam fell; and what should poor Jack Falstaff do in the days of villany? Thou seest I have more flesh than another man; and therefore more frailty. You confess then, you picked my pocket?

PRINCE. It appears so by the story.

169

FAL. Hostess, I forgive thee: go, make ready breakfast; love thy husband, look to thy servants, cherish thy guests: thou shalt find me tractable to any honest reason: thou seest I am pacified still. Nay, prithee, be gone. [*Exit Hostess.*] Now, Hal, to the news at court: for the robbery, lad, how is that answered?

PRINCE. O, my sweet beef, I must still be good angel to thee: the money is paid back again.

FAL. O, I do not like that paying back; 't is a double labour.

179

PRINCE. I am good friends with my father, and may do any thing.

157 *embossed*] swollen.

160-161 *any other . . . these*] anything else which it injured you to deprive you of.

162 *pocket up wrong*] bear injury tamely, without resentment.

FAL. Rob me the exchequer the first thing thou doest, and do it with unwashed hands too.

BARD. Do, my lord.

PRINCE. I have procured thee, Jack, a charge of foot.

FAL. I would it had been of horse. Where shall I find one that can steal well? O for a fine thief, of the age of two and twenty or thereabouts! I am heinously unprovided. Well, God be thanked for these rebels, they offend none but the virtuous: I laud them, I praise them. 191

PRINCE. Bardolph!

BARD. My lord?

PRINCE. Go bear this letter to Lord John of Lancaster, to my brother John; this to my Lord of Westmoreland. [*Exit Bardolph.*] Go, Peto, to horse, to horse; for thou and I have thirty miles to ride yet ere dinner time. [*Exit Peto.*] Jack, meet me to-morrow in the Temple hall at two o'clock in the afternoon.

There shalt thou know thy charge, and there receive 200  
Money and order for their furniture.

The land is burning; Percy stands on high;

And either we or they must lower lie. [*Exit.*]

FAL. Rare words! brave world! Hostess, my break-fast, come!

O, I could wish this tavern were my drum! [*Exit.*]

183 *with unwashed hands*] at once, without waiting (to wash your hands).  
Cf. *K. John*, III, i, 234: "No longer than we well could *wash our hands*."

201 *furniture*] equipment.

205 *my drum*] my headquarters, my rendezvous.





ACT FOURTH — SCENE I

THE REBEL CAMP NEAR SHREWSBURY

*Enter* HOTSPUR, WORCESTER, *and* DOUGLAS

HOTSPUR



WELL SAID, MY NOBLE  
Scot: if speaking truth  
In this fine age were not thought  
flattery,  
Such attribution should the  
Douglas have,  
As not a soldier of this season's  
stamp  
Should go so general current  
through the world.  
By God, I cannot flatter; I do  
defy  
The tongues of soothers; but a  
braver place

In my heart's love hath no man than yourself:  
Nay, task me to my word; approve me, lord.

3 *attribution*] credit.

6-7 *defy* . . . *soothers*] disdain flattering tongues.

9 *task* . . . *approve me*] put my word to the proof, try me.

DOUG. Thou art the king of honour: 10  
No man so potent breathes upon the ground  
But I will beard him.

HOT. Do so, and 'tis well.

*Enter a Messenger with letters*

What letters hast thou there? — I can but thank you.

MESS. These letters come from your father.

HOT. Letters from him! why comes he not himself?

MESS. He cannot come, my lord; he is grievous sick.

HOT. 'Zounds! how has he the leisure to be sick  
In such a justling time? Who leads his power?

Under whose government come they along?

MESS. His letters bear his mind, not I, my lord. 20

WOR. I prithee, tell me, doth he keep his bed?

MESS. He did, my lord, four days ere I set forth;  
And at the time of my departure thence  
He was much fear'd by his physicians.

WOR. I would the state of time had first been whole,  
Ere he by sickness had been visited:  
His health was never better worth than now.

HOT. Sick now! droop now! this sickness doth infect  
The very life-blood of our enterprise;

'Tis catching hither, even to our camp. 30

He writes me here, that inward sickness —  
And that his friends by deputation could not

18 *justling*] jostling.

24 *He was much fear'd by*] He gave much cause of anxiety to.

25 *the state of time*] the current condition of affairs.

32 *by deputation*] by means of a deputy, by vicarious authority. Cf.  
*infra*, IV, iii, 87: "In deputation."

So soon be drawn, nor did he think it meet  
 To lay so dangerous and dear a trust  
 On any soul removed but on his own.  
 Yet doth he give us bold advertisement,  
 That with our small conjunction we should on,  
 To see how fortune is disposed to us;  
 For, as he writes, there is no quailing now,  
 Because the king is certainly possess'd  
 Of all our purposes. What say you to it?

40

WOR. Your father's sickness is a maim to us.

HOT. A perilous gash, a very limb lopp'd off:  
 And yet, in faith, it is not; his present want  
 Seems more than we shall find it: were it good  
 To set the exact wealth of all our states  
 All at one cast? to set so rich a main  
 On the nice hazard of one doubtful hour?  
 It were not good; for therein should we read  
 The very bottom and the soul of hope,  
 The very list, the very utmost bound  
 Of all our fortunes.

50

DOUG. Faith, and so we should;

33 *drawn*] assembled.

35 *any soul removed*] any stranger to him, any separate individuality.

36 *advertisement*] admonition.

37 *conjunction*] assembly of men.

47 *set so rich a main*] lay so large a stake.

49-52 *for therein . . . fortunes*] for (by inviting this risk) we should discover or come face to face with the lowest point (the nadir) and the bare kernel of our ambitious hope; we should reach the extreme verge and boundary of all our fortunes. All our hopes would be doomed.

Where now remains a sweet reversion:  
We may boldly spend upon the hope of what  
Is to come in:

A comfort of retirement lives in this.

HOT. A rendezvous, a home to fly unto,  
If that the devil and mischance look big  
Upon the maidenhead of our affairs.

WOR. But yet I would your father had been here. 60

The quality and hair of our attempt  
Brooks no division: it will be thought  
By some, that know not why he is away,  
That wisdom, loyalty and mere dislike  
Of our proceedings kept the earl from hence:

And think how such an apprehension  
May turn the tide of fearful faction,  
And breed a kind of question in our cause;

For well you know we of the offering side  
Must keep aloof from strict arbitrement, 70  
And stop all sight-holes, every loop from whence

The eye of reason may pry in upon us:  
This absence of your father's draws a curtain,

That shows the ignorant a kind of fear  
Before not dreamt of.

53 *Where . . . a sweet reversion*] Whereas now we have a hopeful expectation, some hope in reserve.

56 *A comfort of retirement*] A support on which we may fall back.

59 *the maidenhead*] the immature stages.

61 *hair*] complexion, character.

69 *the offering side*] the attacking party.

70 *arbitrement*] judicial inquiry.

73 *draws*] withdraws, lifts, raises.

HOT. You strain too far.  
I rather of his absence make this use:  
It lends a lustre and more great opinion,  
A larger dare to our great enterprise,  
Than if the earl were here; for men must think,  
If we without his help can make a head 80  
To push against a kingdom, with his help  
We shall o'erturn it topsy-turvy down.  
Yet all goes well, yet all our joints are whole.

DOUG. As heart can think: there is not such a word  
Spoke of in Scotland as this term of fear.

*Enter SIR RICHARD VERNON*

HOT. My cousin Vernon! welcome, by my soul.

VER. Pray God my news be worth a welcome, lord.  
The Earl of Westmoreland, seven thousand strong,  
Is marching hitherwards; with him Prince John.

HOT. No harm: what more?

VER. And further, I have learn'd,  
The king himself in person is set forth, 91  
Or hitherwards intended speedily,  
With strong and mighty preparation.

HOT. He shall be welcome too. Where is his son,  
The nimble-footed madcap Prince of Wales,  
And his comrades, that daff'd the world aside,  
And bid it pass?

77 *more great opinion*] far greater repute.

78 *dare*] daring.

80 *make a head*] organize a rebellion.

85 *this term of fear*] this word "fear."

96 *daff'd*] tossed contemptuously.

VER. All furnish'd, all in arms;  
 All plumed like estridges that with the wind  
 Baited like eagles having lately bathed;  
 Glittering in golden coats, like images; 100  
 As full of spirit as the month of May,  
 And gorgeous as the sun at midsummer;  
 Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls.  
 I saw young Harry, with his beaver on,  
 His cuisses on his thighs, gallantly arm'd,  
 Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury,  
 And vaulted with such ease into his seat,  
 As if an angel dropp'd down from the clouds,  
 To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus,  
 And witch the world with noble horsemanship. 110  
 HOT. No more, no more: worse than the sun in  
 March,  
 This praise doth nourish agues. Let them come;

98-99 *All plumed . . . bathed*] Thus the original editions. But the reading seems unintelligible. Possibly an intermediate line has dropped out. Some sense can be obtained if we substitute *Bated*, (with a comma attached) for *Baited*. "Bate," used intransitively, is a technical term in falconry for the beating or fluttering of the hawk's wings on the point of flying. The Prince of Wales' comrades would then be compared, in the first place, to ostriches who kept their plumes fluttering in the wind, and, in the second place, to eagles fresh from a bath. Eagles were supposed to renew their strength after bathing.

100 *images*] gaudily painted saints' images.

104 *beaver*] properly the moveable front piece of the helmet; here probably the helmet itself.

105 *cuisses*] a French word for leg or thigh armour.

110 *witch*] bewitch, charm.

They come like sacrifices in their trim,  
And to the fire-eyed maid of smoky war  
All hot and bleeding will we offer them:  
The mailed Mars shall on his altar sit  
Up to the ears in blood. I am on fire  
To hear this rich reprisal is so nigh  
And yet not ours. Come, let me taste my horse,  
Who is to bear me like a thunderbolt 120  
Against the bosom of the Prince of Wales:  
Harry to Harry shall; hot horse to horse,  
Meet and ne'er part till one drop down a corse.  
O that Glendower were come!

VER. There is more news:  
I learn'd in Worcester, as I rode along,  
He cannot draw his power this fourteen days.

DOUG. That's the worst tidings that I hear of yet.

WOR. Ay, by my faith, that bears a frosty sound.

HOT. What may the king's whole battle reach unto?

VER. To thirty thousand.

HOT. Forty let it be: 130  
My father and Glendower being both away,  
The powers of us may serve so great a day.  
Come, let us take a muster speedily:  
Doomsday is near; die all, die merrily.

DOUG. Talk not of dying: I am out of fear  
Of death or death's hand for this one half year. [*Exeunt.*]

113 *like sacrifices . . . trim*] like sacrificial animals trimmed or decked  
for the altar.

114 *maid of smoky war*] the goddess Bellona.

119 *taste*] test, try.

133 *take a muster*] call the roll.

## SCENE II — A PUBLIC ROAD NEAR COVENTRY

*Enter FALSTAFF and BARDOLPH*

FAL. Bardolph, get thee before to Coventry; fill me a bottle of sack: our soldiers shall march through; we'll to Sutton Co'fil' to-night.

BARD. Will you give me money, captain?

FAL. Lay out, lay out.

BARD. This bottle makes an angel.

FAL. An if it do, take it for thy labour; and if it make twenty, take them all; I'll answer the coinage. Bid my lieutenant Peto meet me at town's end.

BARD. I will, captain: farewell. [Exit. 10]

FAL. If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the king's press damnably. I have got, in exchange of a hundred and fifty

3 *Sutton Co'fil'*] Thus the Cambridge editors. The early editions read *Sutton Cophill*. The reference is obviously to Sutton Coldfield, some twenty-five miles northwest of Coventry.

5-6 *lay out . . . angel*] Falstaff probably hands Bardolph some jewel or small article of loot for his henchman to "lay out" on a bottle of drink. Bardolph punningly describes the article as a bottle that will yield the value of an "angel," *i. e.*, a gold coin worth ten shillings.

8 *I'll answer the coinage*] I'll be answerable for the genuineness of the coins.

12 *a soused gurnet*] a pickled gurnet; reckoned a vulgar dish, and constantly used as a term of contempt.

*the king's press*] the king's commission for impressing soldiers.



soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. I press me none but good householders, yeomen's sons; inquire me out contracted bachelors, such as had been asked twice on the banns; such a commodity of warm slaves, as had as lieve hear the devil as a drum; such as fear the report of a caliver worse than a struck fowl or a hurt wild-duck. I pressed me none but such toasts-and-<sup>20</sup> butter, with hearts in their bellies no bigger than pins'-heads, and they have bought out their services; and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores; and such as indeed were never soldiers, but discarded unjust serving-men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters, and ostlers trade-fallen; the cankers of a calm world and a long peace, ten times more dishonourable ragged than an old faced ancient:<sup>30</sup> and such have I, to fill up the rooms of them that have bought out their services, that you would think that I

14 *I press me*] I impress; so line 20, *infra*.

19 *caliver*] musket.

20 *I pressed me*] I impressed, as in line 14, *supra*.

*toasts-and-butter*] cockneys; men addicted to delicate feeding.

23 *ancients*] ensigns; a colloquial corruption. The word was applied both to the regimental flag and to the officer who carried it. Cf. line 30, *infra*.

24-25 *Lazarus in the painted cloth*] The story of Lazarus and other scriptural tales were often depicted in the painted cloths or rough tapestries which adorned middle-class houses.

28 *trade-fallen*] out of trade, out of work.

30 *old faced ancient*] old patched military flag. "Ancient" is a colloquial corruption of ensign. See line 23, *supra*.

had a hundred and fifty tattered prodigals lately come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks. A mad fellow met me on the way and told me I had unloaded all the gibbets and pressed the dead bodies. No eye hath seen such scarecrows. I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat: nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had gyves on; for indeed I had the most of them out of prison. There's <sup>40</sup> but a shirt and a half in all my company; and the half shirt is two napkins tacked together and thrown over the shoulders like a herald's coat without sleeves; and the shirt, to say the truth, stolen from my host at Saint Alban's, or the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry. But that's all one; they'll find linen enough on every hedge.

*Enter the PRINCE and WESTMORELAND*

PRINCE. How now, blown Jack! how now, quilt!

FAL. What, Hal! how now, mad wag! what a devil dost thou in Warwickshire? My good Lord of Westmoreland, I cry you mercy: I thought your honour had <sup>50</sup> already been at Shrewsbury.

WEST. Faith, Sir John, 't is more than time that I were there, and you too; but my powers are there

34 *draff*] refuse.

39 *gyves*] shackles, fetters.

43 *herald's coat without sleeves*] the sleeveless tabard of the professional herald.

44-45 *Saint Alban's . . . Daventry*] Both these towns lie on the direct road from London to Coventry.

47 *quilt*] The Prince likens plump Falstaff to a liberally stuffed bed-quilt.

already. The king, I can tell you, looks for us all: we must away all night.

FAL. Tut, never fear me: I am as vigilant as a cat to steal cream.

PRINCE. I think, to steal cream indeed, for thy theft hath already made thee butter. But tell me, Jack, whose fellows are these that come after? 60

FAL. Mine, Hal, mine.

PRINCE. I did never see such pitiful rascals.

FAL. Tut, tut; good enough to toss; food for powder, food for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better: tush, man, mortal men, mortal men.

WEST. Ay, but, Sir John, methinks they are exceeding poor and bare, too beggarly.

FAL. Faith, for their poverty, I know not where they had that; and for their bareness, I am sure they never learned that of me. 70

PRINCE. No, I'll be sworn; unless you call three fingers on the ribs bare. But, sirrah, make haste: Percy is already in the field.

FAL. What, is the king encamped?

WEST. He is, Sir John: I fear we shall stay too long.

FAL. Well,

To the latter end of a fray and the beginning of a feast  
Fits a dull fighter and a keen guest. [Exeunt.]

63 to toss] *sc.* on a pike. Cf. *3 Hen. VI*, I, i, 244, 245: "The soldiers should have *toss'd me on their pikes* Before I would have granted."  
71-72 *three fingers . . . ribs*] three fingers' breadth of flesh.

## SCENE III — THE REBEL CAMP NEAR SHREWSBURY

*Enter* HOTSPUR, WORCESTER, DOUGLAS, and VERNON

HOT. We'll fight with him to-night.

WOR. It may not be.

DOUG. You give him then advantage.

VER. Not a whit.

HOT. Why say you so? looks he not for supply?

VER. So do we.

HOT. His is certain, ours is doubtful.

WOR. Good cousin, be advised; stir not to-night.

VER. Do not, my lord.

DOUG. You do not counsel well:

You speak it out of fear and cold heart.

VER. Do me no slander, Douglas: by my life,

And I dare well maintain it with my life,

If well-respected honour bid me on,

I hold as little counsel with weak fear

As you, my lord, or any Scot that this day lives:

Let it be seen to-morrow in the battle

Which of us fears.

DOUG. Yea, or to-night.

VER. Content.

HOT. To-night, say I.

VER. Come, come, it may not be. I wonder much,

Being men of such great leading as you are,

That you foresee not what impediments

Drag back our expedition: certain horse

---

17 *leading*] generalship.

Of my cousin Vernon's are not yet come up: 20  
Your uncle Worcester's horse came but to-day;  
And now their pride and mettle is asleep,  
Their courage with hard labour tame and dull,  
That not a horse is half the half of himself.

HOT. So are the horses of the enemy  
In general, journey-bated and brought low:  
The better part of ours are full of rest.

WOR. The number of the king exceedeth ours:  
For God's sake, cousin, stay till all come in.

[*The trumpet sounds a parley.*]

*Enter* SIR WALTER BLUNT

BLUNT. I come with gracious offers from the king, 30  
If you vouchsafe me hearing and respect.

HOT. Welcome, Sir Walter Blunt; and would to God  
You were of our determination!  
Some of us love you well; and even those some  
Envy your great deservings and good name,  
Because you are not of our quality,  
But stand against us like an enemy.

BLUNT. And God defend but still I should stand so,  
So long as out of limit and true rule  
You stand against anointed majesty. 40  
But to my charge. The king hath sent to know

26 *journey-bated*] exhausted with travel.

36 *quality*] fellowship. The word was technically used of the actor's profession.

38 *God defend*] God forbid.

39 *out of limit*] out of bounds, rebelliously.

The nature of your griefs, and whereupon  
You conjure from the breast of civil peace  
Such bold hostility, teaching his duteous land  
Audacious cruelty. If that the king  
Have any way your good deserts forgot,  
Which he confesseth to be manifold,  
He bids you name your griefs; and with all speed  
You shall have your desires with interest,  
And pardon absolute for yourself and these 50  
Herein misled by your suggestion.

HOT. The king is kind; and well we know the king  
Knows at what time to promise, when to pay.  
My father and my uncle and myself  
Did give him that same royalty he wears;  
And when he was not six and twenty strong,  
Sick in the world's regard, wretched and low,  
A poor unminded outlaw sneaking home,  
My father gave him welcome to the shore;  
And when he heard him swear and vow to God 60  
He came but to be Duke of Lancaster,  
To sue his livery and beg his peace,  
With tears of innocency and terms of zeal,  
My father, in kind heart and pity moved,  
Swore him assistance and perform'd it too.  
Now when the lords and barons of the realm

42 *griefs*] grievances.

51 *by your suggestion*] at your prompting, instigation.

58 *unminded*] unnoticed.

62 *To sue his livery . . . peace*] To sue for the delivery to him of his  
forfeited lands, and to beg for their peaceable enjoyment. Cf.  
*Richard II*, II, i, 204, II, iii, 629.

Perceived Northumberland did lean to him,  
 The more and less came in with cap and knee;  
 Met him in boroughs, cities, villages,  
 Attended him on bridges, stood in lanes, 70  
 Laid gifts before him, proffer'd him their oaths,  
 Gave him their heirs, as pages follow'd him  
 Even at the heels in golden multitudes.  
 He presently, as greatness knows itself,  
 Steps me a little higher than his vow  
 Made to my father, while his blood was poor,  
 Upon the naked shore of Ravenspurgh;  
 And now, forsooth, takes on him to reform  
 Some certain edicts and some strait decrees  
 That lie too heavy on the commonwealth, 80  
 Cries out upon abuses, seems to weep  
 Over his country's wrongs; and by this face,  
 This seeming brow of justice, did he win  
 The hearts of all that he did angle for;  
 Proceeded further; cut me off the heads  
 Of all the favourites that the absent king  
 In deputation left behind him here,  
 When he was personal in the Irish war.

BLUNT. Tut, I came not to hear this.

HOT.

Then to the point.

In short time after, he deposed the king; 90

70 *stood in lanes*] lined the narrow country roads.

74 *as greatness knows itself*] realizing the greatness of his opportunities.

76 *while his blood was poor*] while he was in poor, dispirited condition.

87 *In deputation*] As his deputies. Cf. *supra*, IV, i, 32, "by *deputation*."

88 *was personal*] was present in person.

Soon after that, deprived him of his life;  
 And in the neck of that, task'd the whole state;  
 To make that worse, suffer'd his kinsman March,  
 Who is, if every owner were well placed,  
 Indeed his king, to be engaged in Wales,  
 There without ransom to lie forfeited;  
 Disgraced me in my happy victories,  
 Sought to entrap me by intelligence;  
 Rated mine uncle from the council-board;  
 In rage dismiss'd my father from the court; 100  
 Broke oath on oath, committed wrong on wrong,  
 And in conclusion drove us to seek out  
 This head of safety, and withal to pry  
 Into his title, the which we find  
 Too indirect for long continuance.

BLUNT. Shall I return this answer to the king?

HOT. Not so, Sir Walter: we'll withdraw a while.  
 Go to the king; and let there be impawn'd

92 *in the neck of that . . . state*] following quick on that, laid tribute on the whole country.

93 *March*] Sir Edmund Mortimer, who is once again wrongly confused with his kinsmen, the alleged heirs to the crown, the Earls of March. Cf. I, i, 38, *supra*, and note.

95 *engaged*] pledged as a hostage. Cf. V, ii, 44, *infra*.

98 *by intelligence*] by means of spies.

99 *Rated . . . council-board*] For the dismissal of Hotspur's uncle, Worcester, cf. *supra*, I, iii, 15, *seq*.

103 *head of safety*] armed force for our self-protection.

108 *impawn'd*] pledged. The Earl of Westmoreland was sent by Henry IV into Hotspur's camp to be detained as a hostage, while Hotspur's uncle Worcester proceeded to King Henry's quarters. Cf. V, ii, 29-30, *infra*.



Some surety for a safe return again,  
 And in the morning early shall mine uncle 110  
 Bring him our purposes: and so farewell.

BLUNT. I would you would accept of grace and love.

HOT. And may be so we shall.

BLUNT. Pray God you do.  
 [Exeunt.]

## SCENE IV — YORK

## THE ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE

*Enter the ARCHBISHOP OF YORK and SIR MICHAEL*

ARCH. Hie, good Sir Michael; bear this sealed brief  
 With winged haste to the lord marshal;  
 This to my cousin Scroop, and all the rest  
 To whom they are directed. If you knew  
 How much they do import, you would make haste.

SIR M. My good lord,  
 I guess their tenour.

ARCH. Like enough you do.  
 To-morrow, good Sir Michael, is a day  
 Wherein the fortune of ten thousand men  
 Must bide the touch; for, sir, at Shrewsbury, 10  
 As I am truly given to understand,  
 The king with mighty and quick-raised power  
 Meets with Lord Harry: and, I fear, Sir Michael,  
 What with the sickness of Northumberland,

1 *Sir Michael*] Here "Sir" is used, like "Dominus," as the customary title of a clergyman.

*brief*] letter.

10 *bide the touch*] stand the test.

Whose power was in the first proportion,  
And what with Owen Glendower's absence thence,  
Who with them was a rated sinew too  
And comes not in, o'er-ruled by prophecies,  
I fear the power of Percy is too weak  
To wage an instant trial with the king. 20

SIR M. Why, my good lord, you need not fear;  
There is Douglas and Lord Mortimer.

ARCH. No, Mortimer is not there.

SIR M. But there is Mordake, Vernon, Lord Harry  
Percy,  
And there is my Lord of Worcester and a head  
Of gallant warriors, noble gentlemen.

ARCH. And so there is: but yet the king hath drawn  
The special head of all the land together:  
The Prince of Wales, Lord John of Lancaster,  
The noble Westmoreland and warlike Blunt; 30  
And many mo corrivals and dear men  
Of estimation and command in arms.

SIR M. Doubt not, my lord, they shall be well  
opposed.

ARCH. I hope no less, yet needful 'tis to fear;  
And, to prevent the worst, Sir Michael, speed:  
For if Lord Percy thrive not, ere the king

15 *Whose power . . . proportion*] Whose quota was largest of any (among the conspirators).

17 *a rated sinew*] an anticipated source of strength.

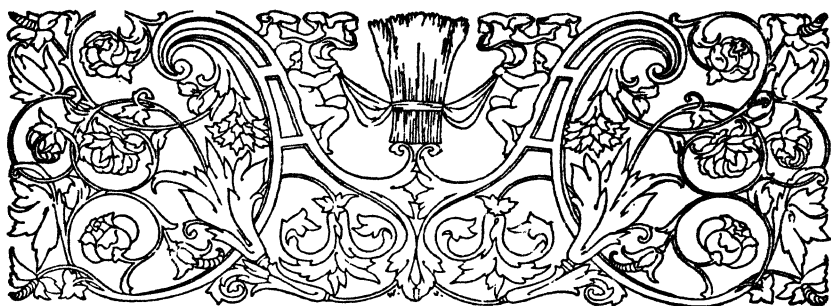
28 *special head*] choicest armed forces.

31-32 *mo corrivals . . . estimation*] more associates and men of highest esteem.

THE FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV ACT IV

---

Dismiss his power, he means to visit us,  
For he hath heard of our confederacy,  
And 't is but wisdom to make strong against him :  
Therefore make haste. I must go write again 40  
To other friends ; and so farewell, Sir Michael. [*Exeunt.*]



## ACT FIFTH — SCENE I

### THE KING'S CAMP NEAR SHREWSBURY

*Enter the KING, PRINCE OF WALES, LORD JOHN OF LANCASTER, SIR WALTER BLUNT, and FALSTAFF*

KING



OW BLOODILY THE SUN  
begins to peer  
Above yon busky hill! the day  
looks pale  
At his distemperature.

PRINCE.                      The south-  
ern wind  
Doth play the trumpet to his  
purposes,  
And by his hollow whistling in  
the leaves  
Foretells a tempest and a bluster-  
ing day.

KING. Then with the losers let it sympathise,  
For nothing can seem foul to those that win.

*[The trumpet sounds.]*

(stage direction) *Enter the KING . . . FALSTAFF* All the early editions  
include among the persons of this scene the Earl of Westmore-

*Enter WORCESTER and VERNON*

How now, my Lord of Worcester! 'tis not well  
 That you and I should meet upon such terms 10  
 As now we meet. You have deceived our trust,  
 And made us doff our easy robes of peace.  
 To crush our old limbs in ungentle steel:  
 This is not well, my lord, this is not well.  
 What say you to it? will you again unknit  
 This churlish knot of all-aborred war?  
 And move in that obedient orb again  
 Where you did give a fair and natural light,  
 And be no more an exhaled meteor,  
 A prodigy of fear, and a portent 20  
 Of broached mischief to the unborn times?

WOR. Hear me, my liege:  
 For mine own part, I could be well content  
 To entertain the lag-end of my life

---

land. But it is expressly stated, V, ii, 29, *infra*, that he was at the moment in the rebel camp. His name has therefore been deleted here.

2 *bosky*] bosky, wooded, bushy.

3 *At his distemperature*] Owing to the sun's disturbed aspect. Cf. III, i, 34, *supra*.

4 *his purposes*] the wind's own purposes of raising a storm.

13 *old limbs*] As a matter of history the king was only thirty-six years old, while his son was about sixteen. But Shakespeare ignores the historical chronology.

17 *obedient orb*] orbit of obedience.

19 *an exhaled meteor*] meteors were supposed to be formed of vapours drawn out of the earth by the sun. Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, III, v, 13: "It is some meteor that the sun exhales," and *supra*, II, iv, 311, "these exhalations."

With quiet hours; for, I do protest  
I have not sought the day of this dislike.

KING. You have not sought it! how comes it, then?

FAL. Rebellion lay in his way, and he found it.

PRINCE. Peace, chewet, peace!

WOR. It pleased your majesty to turn your looks      30  
Of favour from myself and all our house;  
And yet I must remember you, my lord,  
We were the first and dearest of your friends.  
For you my staff of office did I break  
In Richard's time; and posted day and night  
To meet you on the way, and kiss your hand,  
When yet you were in place and in account  
Nothing so strong and fortunate as I.  
It was myself, my brother, and his son,  
That brought you home, and boldly did outdare      40  
The dangers of the time. You swore to us,  
And you did swear that oath at Doncaster,  
That you did nothing purpose 'gainst the state;  
Nor claim no further than your new-fall'n right,  
The seat of Gaunt, dukedom of Lancaster:

26 *this dislike*] this disagreeableness, this distasteful business.

29 *chewet*] Cotgrave in his *Fr.-Engl. Dict.* gives the French word "*chouette*," interpreting it as a chough or jackdaw. But this French word is nowhere found in Elizabethan literature, whereas Elizabethans were familiar with the like sounding word "*chuet*" or "*chewet*," which was applied to a mince pie of rich ingredients. Cotgrave explains the French word "*goubelet*" as a kind of "little round pie resembling our *chuet*." The Prince is doubtless scornfully likening Falstaff to a piece of overrich pastry.

32 *remember you*] remind you.

To this we swore our aid. But in short space  
 It rain'd down fortune showering on your head;  
 And such a flood of greatness fell on you,  
 What with our help, what with the absent king,  
 What with the injuries of a wanton time, 50  
 The seeming sufferances that you had borne,  
 And the contrarious winds that held the king  
 So long in his unlucky Irish wars  
 That all in England did repute him dead;  
 And from this swarm of fair advantages  
 You took occasion to be quickly woo'd  
 To gripe the general sway into your hand;  
 Forgot your oath to us at Doncaster;  
 And being fed by us you used us so  
 As that ungentle gull, the cuckoo's bird, 60  
 Useth the sparrow; did oppress our nest;  
 Grew by our feeding to so great a bulk  
 That even our love durst not come near your sight  
 For fear of swallowing; but with nimble wing  
 We were enforced, for safety sake, to fly  
 Out of your sight and raise this present head;  
 Whereby we stand opposed by such means

50-51 *the injuries . . . sufferances*] the injuries done you by King Richard in the wantonness of prosperity and the apparent sufferings.

60-61 *As . . . sparrow*] As that churlish fledgeling the cuckoo's chick uses the sparrow. It was a common belief of naturalists of the time that sparrows hatched cuckoos' eggs, and that their service was rewarded by being devoured by the young cuckoo as soon as it was old enough.

66 *head*] army of rebellion.

67 *we stand opposed . . . means*] we stand in opposition to you because of such means.

As you yourself have forged against yourself,  
By unkind usage, dangerous countenance,  
And violation of all faith and troth  
Sworn to us in your younger enterprise.

KING. These things indeed you have articulate,  
Proclaim'd at market-crosses, read in churches,  
To face the garment of rebellion  
With some fine colour that may please the eye  
Of fickle changelings and poor discontents,  
Which gape and rub the elbow at the news  
Of hurlyburly innovation:  
And never yet did insurrection want  
Such water-colours to impaint his cause;  
Nor moody beggars, starving for a time  
Of pellmell havoc and confusion.

PRINCE. In both your armies there is many a  
soul  
Shall pay full dearly for this encounter,  
If once they join in trial. Tell your nephew,  
The Prince of Wales doth join with all the world  
In praise of Henry Percy: by my hopes,  
This present enterprise set off his head,  
I do not think a braver gentleman,  
More active-valiant or more valiant-young, 90  
More daring or more bold, is now alive

**72 *articulate***] set out in articles, formally defined.

74 *face*] trim, give plausible edge to.

77 *rub the elbow*] a gesture of satisfaction.

78 *hurlyburly*] boisterous, turbulent.

80 *water-colours . . . cause*] weak, watery forces to adorn its pretensions.

88 *set off his head*] struck off his record.



To grace this latter age with noble deeds.  
For my part, I may speak it to my shame,  
I have a truant been to chivalry;  
And so I hear he doth account me too;  
Yet this before my father's majesty —  
I am content that he shall take the odds  
Of his great name and estimation,  
And will, to save the blood on either side,  
Try fortune with him in a single fight. 100

KING. And, Prince of Wales, so dare we venture  
thee,

Albeit considerations infinite  
Do make against it. No, good Worcester, no,  
We love our people well; even those we love  
That are misled upon your cousin's part;  
And, will they take the offer of our grace,  
Both he and they and you, yea, every man  
Shall be my friend again and I'll be his:  
So tell your cousin, and bring me word  
What he will do: but if he will not yield, 110  
Rebuke and dread correction wait on us  
And they shall do their office. So, be gone;  
We will not now be troubled with reply:  
We offer fair; take it advisedly.

*[Exeunt Worcester and Vernon.]*

PRINCE. It will not be accepted, on my life:  
The Douglas and the Hotspur both together  
Are confident against the world in arms.

KING. Hence, therefore, every leader to his charge;

For, on their answer, will we set on them :

And God befriend us, as our cause is just !

120

*[Exeunt all but the Prince of Wales and Falstaff.]*

FAL. Hal, if thou see me down in the battle, and bestride me, so ; 't is a point of friendship.

PRINCE. Nothing but a colossus can do thee that friendship. Say thy prayers, and farewell.

FAL. I would 't were bed-time, Hal, and all well.

PRINCE. Why, thou owest God a death. *[Exit.]*

FAL. 'T is not due yet ; I would be loath to pay him before his day. What need I be so forward with him that calls not on me ? Well, 't is no matter ; honour pricks me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I come on ? how then ? Can honour set to a leg ? no : or an arm ? no : or take away the grief of a wound ? no. Honour hath no skill in surgery, then ? no. What is honour ? a word. What is in that word honour ? what is that honour ? air. A trim reckoning ! Who hath it ? he that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it ? no. Doth he hear it ? no. 'T is insensible, then ? yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living ? no. Why ? detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I 'll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon : and so ends my catechism. *[Exit.]* 140

119 *on their answer*] on receiving their answer.

121 *bestride*] stand over and so protect. Cf. *2 Hen. VI*, V, iii, 9 : "I. *bestrid* him."

140 *a mere scutcheon*] mere heraldic blazonry.

## SCENE II — THE REBEL CAMP

*Enter WORCESTER and VERNON*

WOR. O, no, my nephew must not know, Sir Richard,  
The liberal and kind offer of the king.

VER. 'T were best he did.

WOR. Then are we all undone.  
It is not possible, it cannot be,  
The king should keep his word in loving us;  
He will suspect us still, and find a time  
To punish this offence in other faults:  
Suspicion all our lives shall be stuck full of eyes;  
For treason is but trusted like the fox,  
Who, ne'er so tame, so cherish'd and lock'd up, 10  
Will have a wild trick of his ancestors.  
Look how we can, or sad or merrily,  
Interpretation will misquote our looks,  
And we shall feed like oxen at a stall,  
The better cherish'd, still the nearer death.  
My nephew's trespass may be well forgot;  
It hath the excuse of youth and heat of blood;  
And an adopted name of privilege,  
A hare-brain'd Hotspur, govern'd by a spleen:

8 *Suspicion*] All the old editions wrongly read *Supposition*. The correction is due to Rowe.

13 *misquote*] misread, misunderstand.

18-19 *an adopted . . . Hotspur*] the assumed name of Hotspur (which implies a reckless temper) might be held to privilege or shield him (from censure for his acts of wildness).

19 *govern'd . . . spleen*] governed by whimsical temper. Cf. *T. of Shrew*, III, ii, 10: "a mad-brain rudesby, full of *spleen*."

All his offences live upon my head  
And on his father's; we did train him on,  
And, his corruption being ta'en from us,  
We, as the spring of all, shall pay for all.  
Therefore, good cousin, let not Harry know,  
In any case, the offer of the king.

VER. Deliver what you will; I'll say 't is so.  
Here comes your cousin.

*Enter HOTSPUR and DOUGLAS*

HOT. My uncle is return'd:  
Deliver up my Lord of Westmoreland.  
Uncle, what news?

WOR. The king will bid you battle presently.

DOUG. Defy him by the Lord of Westmoreland.

HOT. Lord Douglas, go you and tell him so.

DOUG. Marry, and shall, and very willingly. [*Exit.*]

WOR. There is no seeming mercy in the king.

HOT. Did you beg any? God forbid!

WOR. I told him gently of our grievances,  
Of his oath-breaking; which he mended thus,  
By now forswearing that he is forsworn:  
He calls us rebels, traitors; and will scourge  
With haughty arms this hateful name in us.

29 *Deliver . . . Westmoreland*] Hotspur had detained Westmoreland by way of hostage for his uncle Worcester, while the latter was in the king's camp. Cf. IV, iv, 108, 109.

31 *will bid . . . presently*] summons you at once to the engagement.

*Re-enter DOUGLAS*

DOUG. Arm, gentlemen; to arms! for I have thrown  
A brave defiance in King Henry's teeth,  
And Westmoreland, that was engaged, did bear it;  
Which cannot choose but bring him quickly on.

WOR. The Prince of Wales stepp'd forth before the  
king,

And, nephew, challenged you to single fight.

HOR. O, would the quarrel lay upon our heads,  
And that no man might draw short breath to-day  
But I and Harry Monmouth! Tell me, tell me, 50  
How show'd his tasking? seem'd it in contempt?

VER. No, by my soul; I never in my life  
Did hear a challenge urged more modestly,  
Unless a brother should a brother dare  
To gentle exercise and proof of arms.  
He gave you all the duties of a man;  
Trimm'd up your praises with a princely tongue,  
Spoke your deservings like a chronicle,  
Making you ever better than his praise  
By still disparaging praise valued with you; 60  
And, which became him like a prince indeed,  
He made a blushing cital of himself;

44 *engaged*] detained as a hostage. Cf. IV, iii, 95, *supra*.

51 *How show'd his tasking?*] What was the character of his searching criticism or censure?

56 *He gave . . . man*] He credited you with all the merits due to a man.

60 *By still . . . with you*] By disparaging the praise bestowed upon you when compared with your deserts.

62 *a blushing cital*] a penitent impeachment or accusation. The word "cital" is unknown elsewhere.

And chid his truant youth with such a grace  
As if he master'd there a double spirit  
Of teaching and of learning instantly.  
There did he pause: but let me tell the world,  
If he outlive the envy of this day,  
England did never owe so sweet a hope,  
So much misconstrued in his wantonness.

HOT. Cousin, I think thou art enamoured 70  
On his follies: never did I hear  
Of any prince so wild a libertine.  
But be he as he will, yet once ere night  
I will embrace him with a soldier's arm,  
That he shall shrink under my courtesy.  
Arm, arm with speed: and, fellows, soldiers, friends,  
Better consider what you have to do  
Than I, that have not well the gift of tongue,  
Can lift your blood up with persuasion.

*Enter a Messenger*

MESS. My lord, here are letters for you. 80

HOT. I cannot read them now.

O gentlemen, the time of life is short!  
To spend that shortness basely were too long,  
If life did ride upon a dial's point,  
Still ending at the arrival of an hour.  
An if we live, we live to tread on kings;

---

64 *master'd*] was master of.

65 *instantly*] at the same time.

72 *a libertine*] Capell's emendation of the original text. The first four Quartos read *a libertie*, and the Folios and other early Quartos *at liberty*.

If die, brave death, when princes die with us !  
Now, for our consciences, the arms are fair,  
When the intent of bearing them is just.

*Enter another Messenger*

MESS. My lord, prepare ; the king comes on apace. 90

HOT. I thank him, that he cuts me from my tale,  
For I profess not talking ; only this —  
Let each man do his best : and here draw I  
A sword, whose temper I intend to stain  
With the best blood that I can meet withal  
In the adventure of this perilous day.  
Now, Esperance ! Percy ! and set on.  
Sound all the lofty instruments of war,  
And by that music let us all embrace ;  
For, heaven to earth, some of us never shall 100  
A second time do such a courtesy.

*[The trumpets sound. They embrace and exeunt.]*

### SCENE III — PLAIN BETWEEN THE CAMPS

*The King enters with his power. Alarum to the battle. Then  
enter DOUGLAS and SIR WALTER BLUNT*

BLUNT. What is thy name, that in the battle thus  
Thou crossest me ? what honour dost thou seek  
Upon my head ?

DOUG. Know then, my name is Douglas ;

---

97 *Esperance*] The motto of the Percy family. Cf. II, iii, 68, *supra*.  
100 *heaven to earth*] one might wager heaven to earth.

And I do haunt thee in the battle thus,  
Because some tell me that thou art a king.

BLUNT. They tell thee true.

DOUG. The Lord of Stafford dear to-day hath bought  
Thy likeness; for instead of thee, King Harry,  
This sword hath ended him: so shall it thee,  
Unless thou yield thee as my prisoner. 10

BLUNT. I was not born a yielder, thou proud Scot;  
And thou shalt find a king that will revenge  
Lord Stafford's death. [*They fight. Douglas kills Blunt.*]

*Enter HOTSPUR*

HOT. O Douglas, hadst thou fought at Holmedon  
thus,  
I never had triumph'd upon a Scot.

DOUG. All's done, all's won; here breathless lies  
the king.

HOT. Where?

DOUG. Here.

HOT. This, Douglas? no: I know this face full well:  
A gallant knight he was, his name was Blunt; 20  
Semblably furnish'd like the king himself.

DOUG. A fool go with thy soul, whither it goes!  
A borrowed title hast thou bought too dear:  
Why didst thou tell me that thou wert a king?

---

15 *triumph'd upon*] Thus the first two Quartos. The other Quartos read *triumpt over*, and the Folios *triumphed o're*. The accent falls on the second syllable of "triumph'd," as in V, iv, 14, *infra*.

21 *Semblably furnish'd*] Similarly equipped.

22 *A fool go . . . goes*] You'll be a fool to your dying day.



HOT. The king hath many marching in his coats.

DOUG. Now, by my sword, I will kill all his coats;  
I'll murder all his wardrobe, piece by piece,  
Until I meet the king.

HOT. Up, and away!  
Our soldiers stand full fairly for the day. [Exeunt. 29

*Alarum. Enter FALSTAFF, solus*

FAL. Though I could 'scape shot-free at London, I fear the shot here; here's no scoring but upon the pate. Soft! who are you? Sir Walter Blunt: there's honour for you! here's no vanity! I am as hot as molten lead, and as heavy too: God keep lead out of me! I need no more weight than mine own bowels. I have led my ragamuffins where they are peppered: there's not three of my hundred and fifty left alive; and they are for the town's end, to beg during life. But who comes here?

*Enter the PRINCE*

PRINCE. What, stand'st thou idle here? lend me thy sword:  
Many a nobleman lies stark and stiff 40

29 *stand full fairly for the day*] are making a good bid for victory.

30 *shot-free*] an obvious pun. One meaning of the word is "without paying one's shot or reckoning."

31 *no scoring . . . pate*] another of Falstaff's punning reminiscences of tavern accounts.

37-38 *for the town's end . . . life*] the outskirts of the town, where beggars plied their vocation.

Under the hoofs of vaunting enemies,  
Whose deaths are yet unrevenged: I prithee, lend me  
thy sword.

FAL. O Hal, I prithec, give me leave to breathe a while. Turk Gregory never did such deeds in arms as I have done this day. I have paid Percy, I have made him sure.

PRINCE. He is, indeed; and living to kill thee. I prithee, lend me thy sword.

FAL. Nay, before Gcd, Hal, if Percy be alive, thou get'st not my sword; but take my pistol, if thou wilt.

PRINCE. Give it me: what, is it in the case? 50

FAL. Ay, Hal; 't is hot, 't is hot; there's that will sack a city.

*[The Prince draws it out, and finds it to be a bottle of sack.]*

PRINCE. What, is it a time to jest and dally now?

*[He throws the bottle at him. Exit.]*

FAL. Well, if Percy be alive, I'll pierce him. If he do come in my way, so: if he do not, if I come in his willingly, let him make a carbonado of me. I like not such grinning honour as Sir Walter hath: give me life: which if I can save, so; if not, honour comes unlooked for, and there's an end. [Exit. 59]

44 *Turk Gregory*] A reference to the militant pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand), who filled the papacy from 1073 to 1085.

45 *paid*] paid out, punished. Cf. II, iv, 185, *supra*.

56 *carbonado*] piece of meat slashed for broiling. Cf. *Cor.*, IV, v, 186, 187: "he scotched him and notched him like a *carbonado*."

## SCENE IV — ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

*Alarum. Excursions. Enter the KING, the PRINCE, LORD JOHN OF LANCASTER, and EARL OF WESTMORELAND*

KING. I prithee,  
Harry, withdraw thyself; thou bleed'st too much.  
Lord John of Lancaster, go you with him.

LAN. Not I, my lord, unless I did bleed too.

PRINCE. I beseech your majesty, make up,  
Lest your retirement do amaze your friends.

KING. I will do so.  
My Lord of Westmoreland, lead him to his tent.

WEST. Come, my lord, I'll lead you to your tent.

PRINCE. Lead me, my lord? I do not need your help: 10  
And God forbid a shallow scratch should drive  
The Prince of Wales from such a field as this,  
Where stain'd nobility lies trodden on,  
And rebels' arms triumph in massacres!

LAN. We breathe too long: come, cousin Westmore-  
land,  
Our duty this way lies; for God's sake, come.

*[Exeunt Prince John and Westmoreland.]*

PRINCE. By God, thou hast deceived me, Lancaster;  
I did not think thee lord of such a spirit:  
Before, I loved thee as a brother, John;  
But now, I do respect thee as my soul.

20

5 *make up*] advance.

6 *amaze*] bewilder, strike with panic.

14 *triumph*] The accent falls on the second syllable. Cf. IV, iii, 15, *supra*.

KING. I saw him hold Lord Percy at the point,  
With lustier maintenance than I did look for  
Of such an ungrown warrior.

PRINCE. O, this boy  
Lends mettle to us all! [Exit.

*Enter DOUGLAS*

DOUG. Another king! they grow like Hydra's heads:  
I am the Douglas, fatal to all those  
That wear those colours on them: what art thou,  
That counterfeit'st the person of a king?

K. HEN. The king himself; who, Douglas, grieves  
at heart

So many of his shadows thou hast met 30  
And not the very king. I have two boys  
Seek Percy and thyself about the field:  
But, seeing thou fall'st on me so luckily,  
I will assay thee: so, defend thyself.

DOUG. I fear thou art another counterfeit;  
And yet, in faith, thou bear'st thee like a king:  
But mine I am sure thou art, whoe'er thou be,  
And thus I win thee. [They fight; the King being  
in danger, re-enter Prince of Wales.

PRINCE. Hold up thy head, vile Scot, or thou art like 40  
Never to hold it up again! the spirits  
Of valiant Shirley, Stafford, Blunt, are in my arms:  
It is the Prince of Wales that threatens thee;

21 *hold Lord Percy at the point*] parry Lord Percy's blows.

34 *assay thee*] make trial of, measure swords with, thee.

Who never promiseth but he means to pay.

[*They fight : Douglas flies.*]

Cheerly, my lord; how fares your grace?

Sir Nicholas Gawsey hath for succour sent,

And so hath Clifton: I'll to Clifton straight.

KING. Stay, and breathe a while:

Thou hast redeem'd thy lost opinion,

And show'd thou makest some tender of my life,

In this fair rescue thou hast brought to me.

50

PRINCE. O God! they did me too much injury  
That ever said I hearken'd for your death.

If it were so, I might have let alone

The insulting hand of Douglas over you,

Which would have been as speedy in your end

As all the poisonous potions in the world,

And saved the treacherous labour of your son.

KING. Make up to Clifton: I'll to Sir Nicholas  
Gawsey. [Exit.]

*Enter HOTSPUR*

HOT. If I mistake not, thou art Harry Monmouth.

PRINCE. Thou speak'st as if I would deny my name. 60

HOT. My name is Harry Percy.

PRINCE. Why, then I see

A very valiant rebel of the name.

I am the Prince of Wales; and think not, Percy,

To share with me in glory any more:

---

48 *opinion*] reputation.

49 *makest some tender of*] showest some regard for.

52 *hearken'd for*] waited for. Cf. *T. of Shrew*, I, ii, 256.

58 *Make up to Clifton*] Join Clifton.

Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere;  
Nor can one England brook a double reign,  
Of Harry Percy and the Prince of Wales.

HOT. Nor shall it, Harry; for the hour is come  
To end the one of us; and would to God  
Thy name in arms were now as great as mine! 70

PRINCE. I'll make it greater ere I part from thee;  
And all the budding honours on thy crest  
I'll crop, to make a garland for my head.

HOT. I can no longer brook thy vanities. [*They fight.*

*Enter FALSTAFF*

FAL. Well said, Hal! to it, Hal! Nay, you shall find  
no boy's play here, I can tell you.

*Re-enter DOUGLAS; he fights with FALSTAFF, who falls down as if he were dead, and exit DOUGLAS. HOTSPUR is wounded, and falls*

HOT. O, Harry, thou hast robb'd me of my youth!  
I better brook the loss of brittle life  
Than those proud titles thou hast won of me;  
They wound my thoughts worse than thy sword my flesh: 80  
But thought's the slave of life, and life time's fool;  
And time, that takes survey of all the world,  
Must have a stop. O, I could prophesy,

77 *O, Harry . . . youth*] Holinshed states that Hotspur fell in this battle of Shrewsbury at Prince Henry's hand, but earlier authorities state that Hotspur received his fatal wound from an unidentified warrior.

81-83 *thought's . . . stop*] thought depends on life; life obeys the caprice of time, and time, that embraces all the world in its sway, must have an end. The punctuation here follows that of the Folios.

But that the earthy and cold hand of death  
Lies on my tongue: no, Percy, thou art dust,  
And food for — [Dies.

PRINCE. For worms, brave Percy: fare thee well,  
great heart!

Ill-weaved ambition, how much art thou shrunk!  
When that this body did contain a spirit,  
A kingdom for it was too small a bound; 90  
But now two paces of the vilest earth  
Is room enough: this earth that bears thee dead  
Bears not alive so stout a gentleman.  
If thou wert sensible of courtesy,  
I should not make so dear a show of zeal:  
But let my favours hide thy mangled face;  
And, even in thy behalf, I'll thank myself  
For doing these fair rites of tenderness.  
Adieu, and take thy praise with thee to heaven!  
Thy ignominy sleep with thee in the grave, 100  
But not remember'd in thy epitaph!

[He spieth Falstaff on the ground.]

What, old acquaintance! could not all this flesh  
Keep in a little life? Poor Jack, farewell!  
I could have better spared a better man:  
O, I should have a heavy miss of thee,  
If I were much in love with vanity!  
Death hath not struck so fat a deer to-day,  
Though many dearer, in this bloody fray.  
Embowell'd will I see thee by and by:  
Till then in blood by noble Percy lie. [Exit. 110]

96 *favours*] ribbons worn as a scarf.

109 *Embowell'd*] Embowelled for embalming.

FAL. [*Rising up*] Embowelled! if thou embowel me to-day, I'll give you leave to powder me and eat me too to-morrow. 'Sblood, 't was time to counterfeit, or that hot termagant Scot had paid me scot and lot too. Counterfeit? I lie, I am no counterfeit: to die, is to be a counterfeit; for he is but the counterfeit of a man who hath not the life of a man: but to counterfeit dying, when a man thereby liveth, is to be no counterfeit, but the true and perfect image of life indeed. The better part of valour is discretion; in the which better part I have saved my life. 'Zounds, I am afraid of this gunpowder Percy, though he be dead: how, if he should counterfeit too, and rise? by my faith, I am afraid he would prove the better counterfeit. Therefore I'll make him sure; yea, and I'll swear I killed him. Why may he not rise as well as I? Nothing confutes me but eyes, and nobody sees me. Therefore, sirrah [*stabbing him*], with a new wound in your thigh, come you along with me.

[*Takes up Hotspur on his back.*]

*Re-enter the PRINCE OF WALES and LORD JOHN OF LANCASTER*

PRINCE. Come, brother John; full bravely hast  
thou flesh'd  
Thy maiden sword.

112 *powder*] pickle or salt.

114 *scot and lot*] a weak pun: to "pay scot and lot" was a familiar phrase meaning to "pay one's taxes."

121 *gunpowder Percy*] explosive Percy.



LAN. But, soft! whom have we here? 130  
Did you not tell me this fat man was dead?

PRINCE. I did; I saw him dead,  
Breathless and bleeding on the ground. Art thou  
alive?

Or is it fantasy that plays upon our eyesight?  
I prithee, speak; we will not trust our eyes  
Without our ears: thou art not what thou seem'st.

FAL. No, that's certain; I am not a double man: but  
if I be not Jack Falstaff, then am I a Jack. There is  
Percy [*throwing the body down*]: if your father will do me  
any honour, so; if not, let him kill the next Percy  
himself. I look to be either earl or duke, I can assure  
you. 141

PRINCE. Why, Percy I killed myself, and saw thee  
dead.

FAL. Didst thou? Lord, Lord, how this world is  
given to lying! I grant you I was down and out of  
breath; and so was he: but we rose both at an instant,  
and fought a long hour by Shrewsbury clock. If I may  
be believed, so; if not, let them that should reward  
valour bear the sin upon their own heads. I'll take it  
upon my death, I gave him this wound in the thigh: if  
the man were alive, and would deny it, 'zounds, I would  
make him eat a piece of my sword. 152

LAN. This is the strangest tale that ever I heard.

PRINCE. This is the strangest fellow, brother John.  
Come, bring your luggage nobly on your back:

138 *a Jack*] a Jackanapes.

149 *I'll take it upon my death*] I'll stake my life on it.

For my part, if a lie may do thee grace,  
I'll gild it with the happiest terms I have.

[*A retreat is sounded.*]

The trumpet sounds retreat; the day is ours.  
Come, brother, let us to the highest of the field,  
To see what friends are living, who are dead. 160

[*Exeunt Prince of Wales and Lancaster.*]

FAL. I'll follow, as they say, for reward. He that  
rewards me, God reward him! If I do grow great, I'll  
grow less; for I'll purge, and leave sack, and live cleanly  
as a nobleman should do. [*Exit.*]

#### SCENE V — ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

*The trumpets sound. Enter the KING, PRINCE OF WALES, LORD  
JOHN OF LANCASTER, EARL OF WESTMORELAND, with WOR-  
CESTER and VERNON prisoners*

KING. Thus ever did rebellion find rebuke.  
Ill-spirited Worcester! did not we send grace,  
Pardon and terms of love to all of you?  
And wouldst thou turn our offers contrary?  
Misuse the tenour of thy kinsman's trust?  
Three knights upon our party slain to-day,  
A noble earl and many a creature else  
Had been alive this hour,  
If like a Christian thou hadst truly borne  
Betwixt our armies true intelligence.

10

WOR. What I have done my safety urged me to;

---

2 *Ill-spirited*] Of evil disposition.

And I embrace this fortune patiently,  
Since not to be avoided it falls on me.

KING. Bear Worcester to the death, and Vernon too:  
Other offenders we will pause upon.

*[Exeunt Worcester and Vernon, guarded.]*

How goes the field?

PRINCE. The noble Scot, Lord Douglas, when he saw  
The fortune of the day quite turn'd from him,  
The noble Percy slain, and all his men  
Upon the foot of fear, fled with the rest; 20  
And falling from a hill, he was so bruised  
That the pursuers took him. At my tent  
The Douglas is; and I beseech your grace  
I may dispose of him.

KING. With all my heart.

PRINCE. Then, brother John of Lancaster, to you  
This honourable bounty shall belong:  
Go to the Douglas, and deliver him  
Up to his pleasure, ransomless and free:  
His valour shown upon our crests to-day  
Hath taught us how to cherish such high deeds 30  
Even in the bosom of our adversaries.

LAN. I thank your grace for this high courtesy,  
Which I shall give away immediately.

KING. Then this remains, that we divide our power.  
You, son John, and my cousin Westmoreland

15 *pause upon*] postpone sentence on.

20 *Upon the foot of fear*] Rushing off in fear.

29 *shown . . . crests*] attested by the marks of his blows on our helmets.

32-33 *I thank . . . immediately*] These two lines appear only in the first  
four Quartos. They are omitted by the Folios.

Towards York shall bend you with your dearest speed,  
To meet Northumberland and the prelate Scroop,  
Who, as we hear, are busily in arms:  
Myself and you, son Harry, will towards Wales,  
To fight with Glendower and the Earl of March. 40  
Rebellion in this land shall lose his sway,  
Meeting the check of such another day:  
And since this business so fair is done,  
Let us not leave till all our own be won. [Exeunt.

36 *dearest speed*] utmost haste.











# KING HENRY IV

1399-1413

1399-1413

# **KING . HENRY IV—PART II**

**WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY AUGUSTINE BIRRELL  
AND AN ORIGINAL FRONTISPIECE BY ARTHUR RACKHAM**



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION TO KING HENRY IV, PART II, BY AUGUSTINE BIRRELL . . . . .	ix
TEXT OF THE PLAY . . . . .	1





## INTRODUCTION



It is impossible to keep the two parts of this great drama apart, I may now, having said what I had to say about the greatest character to be found in it, consider some of the others of the piece, all of whom are, as Johnson has said, “diversified with the utmost nicety of discernment and the profoundest skill in the nature of man.”

“We may divide,” says Coleridge, “a dramatic poet’s characteristics into *language*, *passion*, and *character*, always bearing in mind that these must act and react on each other,—the language inspired by the passion, and the language and the passion modified and differenced by the character.”

Of passion, as Shakespeare has taught us what it may be, there is none in this play. Our heart is never torn,

## SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

nor are our sympathies much aroused, save, indeed, when Falstaff's hopes of becoming Fortune's steward, of backing his friends and revenging himself upon my Lord Chief Justice, are so righteously blighted. Then we are sorry. There is no woman in the piece, though in Lady Percy, as well as in the Eastcheap heroines, there are womanly traits to be noted.

It is a play of characters and language. The King himself is as melancholy as a lugged bear. There is exquisite justice in this. Melancholy is ever the fate of the assiduous courtier of public opinion—be the material object of his solicitude what it may. To understand the King in this drama we must study the Henry Bolingbroke of "King Richard II" where his courtship of the common people was closely observed by the King "in possession":—

"How he did seem to dive into their hearts  
With humble and familiar courtesy,  
What reverence he did throw away on slaves,  
Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles  
And patient underbearing of his fortune,  
As 't were to banish their affects with him.  
Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench ;  
A brace of draymen bid God speed him well,  
And had the tribute of his supple knee,  
With 'Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends.'"

This is how Bolingbroke struck Richard, but it is interesting to observe the somewhat different picture Henry the Fourth draws of himself for the benefit of his wild son :—

## INTRODUCTION

“ Had I so lavish of my presence been,  
So common-hackney'd in the eyes of men,  
So stale and cheap to vulgar company,  
Opinion, that did help me to the crown,  
Had still kept loyal to possession  
And left me in reputeless banishment,  
A fellow of no mark nor likelihood.  
By being seldom seen, I could not stir  
But like a comet I was wonder'd at ;  
That men would tell their children ‘ This is he ;’  
Others would say ‘ Where, which is Bolingbroke ?’  
And then I stole all courtesy from heaven,  
And dress'd myself in such humility  
That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,  
Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths,  
Even in the presence of the crowned king.  
Thus did I keep my person fresh and new ;  
My presence, like a robe pontifical,  
Ne'er seen but wonder'd at ; and so my state,  
Seldom but sumptuous, showed like a feast.”

We never quite “ see ourselves as others see us,” but allowing for the very different point of view of the two artists, we have no difficulty in seeing the same man in both pictures, bonnet in hand, assiduously courting public opinion and laying every possible trap for men's suffrages. To be both a popular hero, “ hail fellow, well met,” and at the same time “ a mystery man ” whose comings and goings are carefully studied, may be difficult, but we know it is not impossible.

A Nemesis lies ahead of all tide-waiters, however distinguished ; nor is there any anatomised melancholy so dreary as that of the tired, disillusioned statesman



## SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

whose light begins to burn low. There is not a trace in Henry the Fourth of the gallant, triumphant Duke who rode his hot and fiery steed through the London streets,

“ While all tongues cried, ‘ God save thee, Bolingbroke.’ ”

But instead, we have glimpses of a peevish, tired, wan, and shaken man, needlessly curt in speech, harsh and brutal, with a father’s sorrow for a son he deemed unworthy always gnawing at his heart. Yet he goes on plotting and planning to the end, pursuing a high policy which he is just able in his last hours, as he is taken to die in the Jerusalem Chamber, to transmit with some degree of confidence to his reformed heir. It is a gloomy but effective figure.

Knowing, as we all cannot help doing, that the “ mad-cap ” Prince of Wales is going to live to be Henry the Fifth and win the battle of Agincourt for us, we cannot help but like him.

“ For now sits Expectation in the air,  
And hides a sword from hilts unto the point  
With crowns imperial, crowns and coronets.”

Here again Shakespeare takes no pains whatever to buy our verdict for a national hero. If we cheer, it is at our own risk. Prince Hal is not in himself a pleasing character. We first hear of him in “ Richard II,” beating the watch, robbing passengers, frequenting taverns with loose companions, and returning a coarse and most unchivalric reply to the gallant Hotspur who sought to

## INTRODUCTION

interest the ne'er-do-well in the royal jousts lately held at Oxford. No doubt, the moment we are introduced to Falstaff we begin to understand and therefore to find excuses. But even then the Prince's attitude towards the knight is not satisfactory. Is it good-fellowship? Poin is the Prince's real friend and Poin never could endure Falstaff. What was the Prince's real feeling? It is too absurd to suppose that even a royal vanity could seriously entertain the notion that Sir John Falstaff was the Prince's butt. Henry was too nimble-witted not to recognise the vast superiority, though obscured by an ill life, of Falstaff over all comers, the Prince himself not excepted. But at times he, too, seems to hate Falstaff. Perhaps he had cause to do so. When he sees the familiar figure lying as he thinks dead by the side of Percy, he pronounces, with true feeling unusual in princes, the well-known words : —

“What, old acquaintance! could not all this flesh  
Keep in a little life? Poor Jack, farewell!  
I could have better spared a better man.  
O, I should have a heavy miss of thee,  
If I were much in love with vanity!”

Sir John stood for “vanity” in the Prince's life and as such had to be put on one side, else “farewell, Prince.”

If the Prince, on his “madcap” side, strikes a little chilly, we must not forget the exigency of the modern drama which demands that the audience should early be taken into the playwright's confidence, and assured, in this instance out of the Prince's own mouth, in a long aside,

## SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

that he is playing the fool on purpose, and means, all in good time, to throw off his loose behaviour and become a reformed character and national hero. This is eminently satisfactory, but not Rabelaisian.

The two Harrys, of Monmouth and of the North, as they alternately occupy the boards, meeting but once in the combat fatal to one of them, make a noble contrast. Each has a lively conception of the other's foibles. Prince Hal's mimicry of Hotspur is worthy of a friend of Falstaff's.

"I am not yet of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the North; he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife, 'Fie upon this quiet life! I want work.' 'O my sweet Harry,' says she, 'how many hast thou killed to-day?' 'Give my roan horse a drench,' says he; and answers, 'Some fourteen,' an hour after; 'a trifle, a trifle.' I prythee, call in Falstaff; I'll play Percy, and that damned brawn shall play Dame Mortimer his wife."

Excellent as this is, if the little play had been proceeded with, and that "damned brawn" Falstaff had been cast in the lady's part, he would have made it the leading one in the piece, brawn or no brawn.

Hotspur's reference to the Prince is of a more dignified character, though it refers satirically to his well-known fleetness of foot:—

"Where is his son,  
The nimble-footed madcap Prince of Wales,  
And his comrades, that daff'd the world aside,  
And bid it pass?"

## INTRODUCTION

This question enables Sir Richard Vernon, to whom it was addressed, to make his famous reply : —

“ I saw young Harry, with his beaver on,  
His cuisses on his thighs, gallantly arm'd,  
Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury,  
And vaulted with such ease into his seat,  
As if an angel dropp'd down from the clouds,  
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus  
And witch the world with noble horsemanship.”

They meet at last, “ Harry to Harry ” : —

*Hotspur.* If I mistake not, thou art Harry Monmouth.

*Prince Henry.* Thou speak'st as if I would deny my name.

*Hotspur.* My name is Harry Percy.

*Prince Henry.*

Why, then I see

A very valiant rebel of the name.

I am the Prince of Wales ; and think not, Percy,

To share with me in glory any more :

Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere ;

Nor can one England brook a double reign,

Of Harry Percy and the Prince of Wales.

*Hotspur.* Nor shall it, Harry ; for the hour is come

To end the one of us ; and would to heaven

Thy name in arms were now as great as mine !

*Prince Henry.* I'll make it greater ere I part from thee ;

And all the budding honours on thy crest

I'll crop, to make a garland for my head.

*Hotspur.* I can no longer brook thy vanities. [*They fight.*”

This is fine chivalry. Hotspur falls, mortally wounded, and so the odds between the two Harrys are made even ; though Prince Hal was at no time capable of the splendid gallantry that prompted the exclamation : —

## SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

“ And would to heaven  
Thy name in arms were now as great as mine ! ”

Another character full of matter for musing is Owen Glendower, — that solemn Welshman belonging to a Celtic type better known in life than in fiction. He is almost preternaturally grave, ideally conceited, and has his brain stuffed full of nonsensical stories —

“ Of the moldwarp and the ant,  
Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies,  
And of a dragon and a finless fish,  
A clip-wing'd griffin and a moulten raven,  
A couching lion and a ramping cat ” —

all of which are to him sober realities, as being in one way or another connected with or akin to his own extraordinary nativity, where, as he tells us,

“ The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,”

and the earth shook “ like a coward.” Hotspur makes fine English fun of all these absurdities, but without avail, for the moon-struck Celt does but repeat himself :

“ Give me leave  
To tell you once again that at my birth  
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes ;  
The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds  
Were strangely clamorous to the frightened fields.”

Glendower was no doubt what his son-in-law Mortimer declared him to be, a well-read gentleman and valiant as a lion ; but I prefer Fluellen, who was also

## INTRODUCTION

a Welshman, and equally well read and quite as valiant.<sup>1</sup>

Owen Glendower's daughter, who is married to Mortimer and speaks no English, is one of Shakespeare's triumphs. How it is encompassed who can say? Coleridge was fond of quoting, as an instance of Shakespeare's powers in *minimis*, James Gurney, a character in "King John," who has but four words allowed to his dramatic life, "Good leave, good Philip." S. T. C. was fortunate enough to be able to find in these four words both individuality and comicality. Who put them there is at least uncertain, but Lady Mortimer manages to be individual and mirth-provocative without a single reported word, for though we are told she speaks, it is in Welsh and remains unrendered. True it is that her father takes upon himself to interpret one of her speeches, and sentimental stuff he makes of it, but it is impossible to have any confidence in the truthfulness of Glendower. The result, however, is that Mortimer — that noble earl, who does not know a word of Welsh — meekly does what he believes his wife told him to do, that is, lies down and rests his head in her lap. Thereupon Hotspur, that "giddy goose," as his delightful wife calls him, makes Lady Percy lie down, and proceeds, in mockery, to bury his head in her lap. Glendower, as a man of feeling, is greatly pleased and bids music to be struck up, and then after some highly comic bywords between the two Percys, Lady Mortimer sings a Welsh

<sup>1</sup> Sir Walter Scott, however, was of a different way of thinking, and wishes we had more of the Glendower.

## SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

song. A better bit of theatrical "business" is nowhere to be found. Pity it is we so seldom have a chance of seeing it.

As Falstaff is the supreme study of wit, tarnished in its setting by an ill life in town, so Justice Shallow is the corresponding study of dulness, grown intensified in the country amidst ewes and bullocks. The one study is as rich and inexhaustible as the other. Shakespeare could do everything. He can make a wise man talk wisely and a witty man wittily; he can make an angry man talk as if he were indeed in a passion and a madman talk as if he had lost his senses, and a fool as if he had no senses to lose.

The barrenness and emptiness of Shallow's mind and vocabulary, his direful, intellectual poverty, are exhibited to us with almost as much wealth of illustration, with the same convincing force, as are the endless resources of Falstaff's brain and the marvellous fertility of his imagination.

Shakespeare never fails to do full justice to a fool, and that he loved depicting one is plain enough; a fool *par excellence* that is, one seized in fee-simple of his folly. Such a one is Sir Andrew Aguecheek in "Twelfth Night," who holds his patent of stupidity direct from heaven.

Robert Shallow is not so complete a fool as Sir Andrew, who could hardly have passed muster at the Gloucestershire Quarter Sessions, but he belongs to the great race.

It was a fine stroke of fancy to make Falstaff and Shal-

## INTRODUCTION

low contemporaries in London more than half a century before they meet in the third act of the "Second Part of Henry IV." Between the two men there can never have been more than the barest acquaintanceship, for Shallow was not at any time a thing of the slightest account, save in his own poor fraudulent fancy; whilst Falstaff, then a slim page in the Duke of Norfolk's household, and with a good wit that could "make use of anything," had the world at his feet. Still, every dog has his day, and Shallow was at Clement's Inn — a scarecrow of a creature it may be, but with his heart as choked with unfulfilled desire as the greatest of them all. When he asks us to believe that one day he actually fought with Simon Stockfish, the fruiterer, behind Gray's Inn, we flatly refuse to do so; he is lying we know, "this same starved Justice." Old men are subject to this vice, but from the lies they tell us we can guess what they would like to have been; and Shallow felt he lacked but the sinews to be a swashbuckler.

The contrast between the two old men, both now at the end of their tether, is forcibly presented and emphasised in every line of their dialogue. Shallow's quavering talk and flatulent egotism seem to bore Sir John, who refuses to go into dinner with his old acquaintance, though he envies him his acres and beeves, and registers the intention of revisiting him after the wars and having a snap at him. How he does so we all know. He sups with the Justice, discovers the unexpected good qualities of Master Silence, and borrows a thousand pounds from his host.



## SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV

---

It may be easy to see nothing but the comedy of Shallow, but as drawn by the master's hand he is a sorrowful figure.

“Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pounds.”

The amiable Shenstone, in one of his essays, cites this famous line as a signal instance of the effectively abrupt, and remarks in his easy eighteenth-century fashion, “I wonder it is not used more frequently, as it has a prodigious effect upon the reader.” It has been used frequently enough, so far as mere abruptness goes, but the “prodigious effect” of it is another matter and is the secret of Shakespeare.

A. BIRRELL.

**THE SECOND PART OF  
KING HENRY IV**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ<sup>1</sup>

RUMOUR, the Presenter.

KING HENRY the Fourth.

HENRY, PRINCE OF WALES, afterwards King Henry V.,

THOMAS, DUKE OF CLARENCE,

PRINCE JOHN OF LANCASTER,

PRINCE HUMPHREY OF GLOUCESTER,

EARL OF WARWICK.

EARL OF WESTMORELAND.

EARL OF SURREY.

GOWER.

HARCOURT.

BLUNT.

Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench.

A Servant of the Chief Justice.

EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

SCROOP, Archbishop of York.

LORD MOWBRAY.

LORD HASTINGS.

LORD BARDOLPH.

SIR JOHN COLVILLE.

TRAVERS and MORTON, retainers of Northumberland.

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

His Page.

BARDOLPH.

PISTOL.

POINS.

PETO.

SHALLOW, } country justices.

SILENCE, }

DAVY, Servant to Shallow.

MOULDY, SHADOW, WART, FEEBLE, and BULLCalf, recruits.

FANG and SNARE, sheriff's officers.

LADY NORTHUMBERLAND.

LADY PERCY.

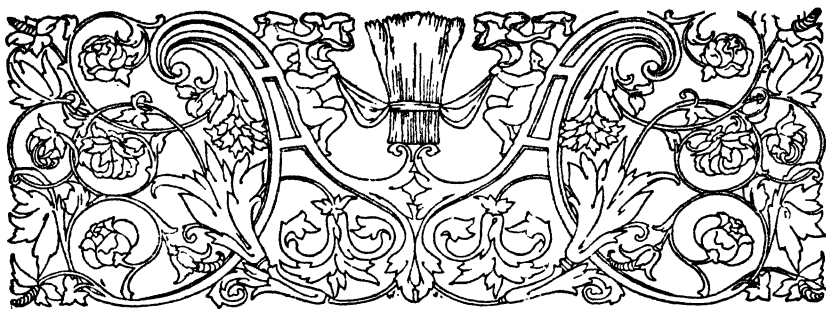
MISTRESS QUICKLY, hostess of a tavern in Eastcheap.

DOLL TEARSHEET.

Lords and Attendants; Porter, Drawers, Beadles, Grooms, &c. A Dancer,  
speaker of the epilogue.

SCENE: *England.*

<sup>1</sup> This play was first printed in a Quarto volume published in 1600. The text of the First Folio supplies several passages which the Quarto omits. The Folio first gave a list of "The Actors' Names" at the extreme end of the piece, and indicated the divisions of the text into both Acts and Scenes.

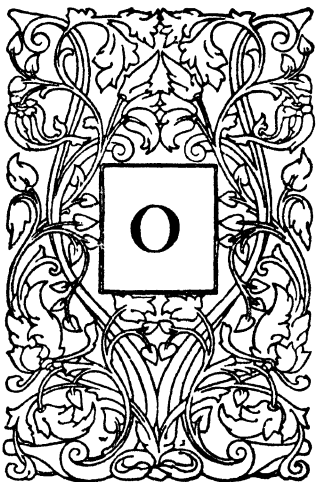


## INDUCTION

### WARKWORTH. BEFORE THE CASTLE

*Enter RUMOUR, painted full of tongues*

RUMOUR



**OPEN YOUR EARS; FOR**

which of you will stop  
The vent of hearing when loud  
Rumour speaks ?

I, from the orient to the drooping  
west,

Making the wind my post-horse,  
still unfold

The acts commenced on this ball  
of earth :

Upon my tongues continual slan-  
ders ride,

The which in every language I  
pronounce,

Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.

I speak of peace, while covert enmity

---

stage direction) *Enter Rumour . . . tongues*] The description of this allegorical personage is mainly derived from Virgil's account of Fama,

## THE SECOND PART OF INDUCTION

---

Under the smile of safety wounds the world: 10  
 And who but Rumour, who but only I,  
 Make fearful musters and prepared defence,  
 Whiles the big year, swoln with some other grief,  
 Is thought with child by the stern tyrant war,  
 And no such matter? Rumour is a pipe  
 Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures,  
 And of so easy and so plain a stop  
 That the blunt monster with uncounted heads,  
 The still-discordant wavering multitude,  
 Can play upon it. But what need I thus 20  
 My well-known body to anatomize  
 Among my household? Why is Rumour here?  
 I run before King Harry's victory;  
 Who in a bloody field by Shrewsbury  
 Hath beaten down young Hotspur and his troops,

*Aeneid*, iv, 173-188. "Rumour" figured in many Elizabethan pageants and masques, arrayed symbolically as in the present text. Thomas Campion, in the *Masque* written for the Earl of Somerset's marriage, 1614, describes the dress of Rumour, who is one of the characters, thus:—"In a skin coat full of winged *tongues*, and over it an antic robe; on his head a cap like a tongue, with a large pair of wings in it."

2 *The vent of hearing*] The aperture of the ears.

17 *a stop*] the finger holes which regulate the sound of a pipe or flute.

23 *I run . . . victory*] The events of the play are represented as following without any interval the battle of Shrewsbury, which was fought on July 1, 1403, and news of which is now brought to Hotspur's father, the Duke of Northumberland. The episodes with which the play deals cover the period of ten years intervening between the battle of Shrewsbury and King Henry IV's death in 1413.

Quenching the flame of bold rebellion  
 Even with the rebels' blood. But what mean I  
 To speak so true at first? my office is  
 To noise abroad that Harry Monmouth fell  
 Under the wrath of noble Hotspur's sword, 30  
 And that the king before the Douglas' rage  
 Stoop'd his anointed head as low as death.  
 This have I rumour'd through the peasant towns  
 Between that royal field of Shrewsbury  
 And this worm-eaten hold of ragged stone,  
 Where Hotspur's father, old Northumberland,  
 Lies crafty-sick: the posts come tiring on,  
 And not a man of them brings other news  
 Than they have learn'd of me: from Rumour's tongues  
 They bring smooth comforts false, worse than true  
 wrongs. [Exit. 40]

28 *To speak*] By speaking.

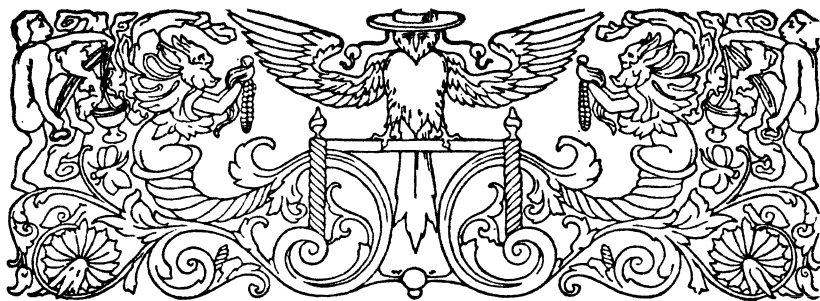
29 *Harry Monmouth*] Prince Henry (afterwards King Henry V), so called from Monmouth, his birthplace.

33 *the peasant towns*] the villages.

35 *hold of ragged stone*] stronghold of rugged stone, the castle at Warkworth. *Hold* is Theobald's correction of the original reading *hole*. For "ragged," cf. I, i, 151, *infra*, "The *ragged'st* [*i. e.*, roughest] hour."

37 *Lies crafty-sick: . . . tiring on*] Feigns illness: the messengers come riding their hardest.

40 *true wrongs*] genuine disasters.



ACT FIRST — SCENE I

THE SAME

*Enter LORD BARDOLPH*

LORD BARDOLPH



HO KEEPS THE GATE  
here, ho?

*The Porter opens the gate*

Where is the earl?

PORT. What shall I say you  
are?

L. BARD. Tell thou the earl  
That the Lord Bardolph doth  
attend him here.

PORT. His lordship is walk'd  
forth into the orchard:

Please it your honour, knock but  
at the gate,

And he himself will answer.

*Enter NORTHUMBERLAND*

L. BARD.

Here comes the earl.

*[Exit Porter.]*

NORTH. What news, Lord Bardolph? every minute now  
Should be the father of some stratagem:  
The times are wild; contention, like a horse  
Full of high feeding, madly hath broke loose 10  
And bears down all before him.

L. BARD. Noble earl,  
I bring you certain news from Shrewsbury.

NORTH. Good, an God will!

L. BARD. As good as heart can wish:  
The king is almost wounded to the death;  
And, in the fortune of my lord your son,  
Prince Harry slain outright; and both the Blunts  
Kill'd by the hand of Douglas; young Prince John  
And Westmoreland and Stafford fled the field;  
And Harry Monmouth's brawn, the hulk Sir John,  
Is prisoner to your son: O, such a day, 20  
So fought, so follow'd and so fairly won,  
Came not till now to dignify the times,  
Since Cæsar's fortunes!

NORTH. How is this derived?  
Saw you the field? came you from Shrewsbury?

L. BARD. I spake with one, my lord, that came from  
thence,  
A gentleman well bred and of good name,  
That freely render'd me these news for true.

NORTH. Here comes my servant Travers, whom I sent  
On Tuesday last to listen after news.

8 *stratagem*] crisis.

19 *brawn*] roll of fat. Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* II, iv, 106: "that damned *brawn*."

29 *listen after*] go after and watch for. Cf. 2 *Hen. VI.* I, iii, 147: "*listen after* Humphrey."



# THE SECOND PART OF

ACT I

*Enter TRAVERS*

L. BARD. My lord, I over-rode him on the way; 30  
And he is furnish'd with no certainties  
More than he haply may retail from me.

NORTH. Now, Travers, what good tidings comes with  
you?

TRA. My lord, Sir John Umfrevile turn'd me back  
With joyful tidings; and, being better horsed,  
Out-rode me. After him came spurring hard  
A gentleman, almost forspent with speed,  
That stopp'd by me to breathe his bloodied horse.  
He ask'd the way to Chester; and of him  
I did demand what news from Shrewsbury: 40  
He told me that rebellion had bad luck,  
And that young Harry Percy's spur was cold.  
With that, he gave his able horse the head,  
And bending forward struck his armed heels  
Against the panting sides of his poor jade  
Up to the rowel-head, and starting so  
He seem'd in running to devour the way,  
Staying no longer question.

NORTH. Ha! Again:  
Said he young Harry Percy's spur was cold?  
Of Hotspur Coldspur? that rebellion 50  
Had met ill luck?

L. BARD. My lord, I'll tell you what;

37 *forspent*] exhausted.

47 *to devour the way*] This figure for extreme speed is common in all  
literature. Cf. *Job*, xxxix, 24: "He swalloweth the ground," and  
Catullus, xxxv, 7, "*viam voravit*."

If my young lord your son have not the day,  
Upon mine honour, for a silken point  
I'll give my barony: never talk of it.

NORTH. Why should that gentleman that rode by  
Travers

Give then such instances of loss?

L. BARD.

Who, he?

He was some hilding fellow that had stolen  
The horse he rode on, and, upon my life,  
Spoke at a venture. Look, here comes more news.

*Enter* MORTON

NORTH. Yea, this man's brow, like to a title-leaf, 60  
Foretells the nature of a tragic volume:  
So looks the strond whereon the imperious flood  
Hath left a witness'd usurpation.

Say, Morton, didst thou come from Shrewsbury?

MOR. I ran from Shrewsbury, my noble lord;  
Where hateful death put on his ugliest mask  
To fright our party.

NORTH. How doth my son and brother?  
Thou tremblest; and the whiteness in thy cheek  
Is apter than thy tongue to tell thy errand.  
Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless, 70  
So dull, so dead in look, so woe-begone,

53 *a silken point*] a silk tag or lace fastening clothes together.

57 *hilding fellow*] base fellow.

62 *strond*] a variant spelling of "strand." Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, i, 4,  
*stronds*.

63 *a witness'd usurpation*] evidence of encroachment.

71 *dead*] sullen. Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, III, ii, 57: "so dead, so grim."

Drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night,  
And would have told him half his Troy was burnt;  
But Priam found the fire ere he his tongue,  
And I my Percy's death ere thou report'st it,  
This thou wouldst say, "Your son did thus and thus;  
Your brother thus: so fought the noble Douglas:"  
Stopping my greedy ear with their bold deeds:  
But in the end, to stop my ear indeed,  
Thou hast a sigh to blow away this praise, 80  
Ending with "Brother, son, and all are dead."

MOR. Douglas is living, and your brother, yet;  
But, for my lord your son, —

NORTH. Why, he is dead.  
See what a ready tongue suspicion hath!  
He that but fears the thing he would not know  
Hath by instinct knowledge from others' eyes  
That what he fear'd is chanced. Yet speak, Morton;  
Tell thou an earl his divination lies,  
And I will take it as a sweet disgrace,  
And make thee rich for doing me such wrong. 90

MOR. You are too great to be by me gainsaid:  
Your spirit is too true, your fears too certain.

NORTH. Yet, for all this, say not that Percy's dead.  
I see a strange confession in thine eye:  
Thou shakest thy head, and hold'st it fear or sin  
To speak a truth. If he be slain, say so;  
The tongue offends not that reports his death:

72 *Drew*] Drew aside, withdrew.

92 *spirit*] intuition.

95 *fear*] danger, cause of fear.

And he doth sin that doth belie the dead,  
Not he which says the dead is not alive.  
Yet the first bringer of unwelcome news 100  
Hath but a losing office, and his tongue  
Sounds ever after as a sullen bell,  
Remember'd tolling a departing friend.

L. BARD. I cannot think, my lord, your son is dead.

MOR. I am sorry I should force you to believe  
That which I would to God I had not seen;  
But these mine eyes saw him in bloody state,  
Rendering faint quittance, wearied and outbreathed,  
To Harry Monmouth; whose swift wrath beat down  
The never-daunted Percy to the earth, 110  
From whence with life he never more sprung up.  
In few, his death, whose spirit lent a fire  
Even to the dullest peasant in his camp,  
Being bruited once, took fire and heat away  
From the best-temper'd courage in his troops;  
For from his metal was his party steel'd;  
Which once in him abated, all the rest  
Turn'd on themselves, like dull and heavy lead:  
And as the thing that's heavy in itself,  
Upon enforcement flies with greatest speed, 120  
So did our men, heavy in Hotspur's loss,  
Lend to this weight such lightness with their fear  
That arrows fled not swifter toward their aim

102 *sullen bell*] dismally tolling bell. Cf. *Sonnet* lxxi, 2: "the surly  
*sullen bell*."

108 *Rendering faint quittance*] Making a faint return (of blows).

116 *his party steel'd*] his side emboldened or nerved.

117 *abated*] blunted, diminished, reduced.

Than did our soldiers, aiming at their safety,  
Fly from the field. Then was that noble Worcester  
Too soon ta'en prisoner; and that furious Scot,  
The bloody Douglas, whose well-labouring sword  
Had three times slain the appearance of the king,  
'Gan vail his stomach and did grace the shame  
Of those that turn'd their backs, and in his flight, 130  
Stumbling in fear, was took. The sum of all  
Is that the king hath won, and hath sent out  
A speedy power to encounter you, my lord,  
Under the conduct of young Lancaster  
And Westmoreland. This is the news at full.

NORTH. For this I shall have time enough to mourn.  
In poison there is physic; and these news,  
Having been well, that would have made me sick,  
Being sick, have in some measure made me well:  
And as the wretch, whose fever-weaken'd joints, 140  
Like strengthless hinges, buckle under life,  
Impatient of his fit, breaks like a fire  
Out of his keeper's arms, even so my limbs,  
Weaken'd with grief, being now enraged with grief,  
Are thrice themselves. Hence, therefore, thou nice  
crutch!

A scaly gauntlet now with joints of steel

129 *vail his stomach*] abate his pride. Cf. *T. of Shrew*, V, ii, 176.

138 *Having been well*] Had I been in good health.

141 *buckle*] bend.

144 *grief . . . grief*] The word in the first place means "bodily pain,"  
and in the second has the ordinary sense of "mental pain" or  
"sorrow."

145 *nice*] effeminate.

Must glove this hand: and hence, thou sickly quoin!  
 Thou art a guard too wanton for the head  
 Which princes, flesh'd with conquest, aim to hit.  
 Now bind my brows with iron; and approach 150  
 The ragged'st hour that time and spite dare bring  
 To frown upon the enraged Northumberland!  
 Let heaven kiss earth! now let not Nature's hand  
 Keep the wild flood confined! let order die!  
 And let this world no longer be a stage  
 To feed contention in a lingering act;  
 But let one spirit of the first-born Cain  
 Reign in all bosoms, that, each heart being set  
 On bloody courses, the rude scene may end,  
 And darkness be the burier of the dead! 160

TRA. This strained passion doth you wrong, my lord.

L. BARD. Sweet earl, divorce not wisdom from your honour.

MOR. The lives of all your loving complices  
 Lean on your health; the which, if you give o'er  
 To stormy passion, must perforce decay.

147 *sickly quoin*] invalid's scarf, handkerchief.

149 *flesh'd with conquest*] stimulated by taste of conquest.

151 *ragged'st*] roughest. Cf. *Ind.*, line 35, *supra*, "*ragged stone*."

160 *And darkness . . . dead*] The speaker invokes chaos to come again, and bury the victims of an universal strife, which shall extirpate mankind.

161 *This strained . . . lord*] The Folios omit this line. The Quarto assigns it to Sir John Umfrevile, who, according to line 34, is not present. Capell first gave it to Travers. Pope made it the opening words of Lord Bardolph's succeeding speech.

You cast the event of war, my noble lord,  
 And summ'd the account of chance, before you said  
 "Let us make head." It was your presurmise,  
 That, in the dole of blows, your son might drop:  
 You knew he walk'd o'er perils, on an edge, 170  
 More likely to fall in than to get o'er;  
 You were advised his flesh was capable  
 Of wounds and scars, and that his forward spirit  
 Would lift him where most trade of danger ranged:  
 Yet did you say "Go forth;" and none of this,  
 Though strongly apprehended, could restrain  
 The stiff-borne action: what hath then befallen,  
 Or what hath this bold enterprise brought forth,  
 More than that being which was like to be?

L. BARD. We all that are engaged to this loss 180  
 Knew that we ventured on such dangerous seas  
 That if we wrought out life 't was ten to one;  
 And yet we ventured, for the gain proposed  
 Choked the respect of likely peril fear'd;

166-179 *You cast . . . to be ?*] This passage first appeared in the First Folio.

168 *Let us make head*] Let us rise in rebellion.

169 *in the dole of blows*] in the distribution of blows.

170-171 *You knew . . . get o'er*] Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, iii, 190-193:

"matter deep and dangerous,

As full of peril and adventurous spirit

As to o'er-walk a current roaring loud

On the unsteadfast footing of a spear."

174 *most trade of danger*] busiest traffic, greatest press of danger.

177 *stiff-borne*] obstinately maintained.

180 *engaged to*] involved in.

184 *the respect*] the consideration.

And since we are o'erset, venture again.  
Come, we will all put forth, body and goods.

MOR. 'T is more than time: and, my most noble lord,  
I hear for certain, and do speak the truth,  
The gentle Archbishop of York is up  
With well-appointed powers: he is a man 190  
Who with a double surety binds his followers.  
My lord your son had only but the corpse,  
But shadows and the shows of men, to fight;  
For that same word, rebellion, did divide  
The action of their bodies from their souls;  
And they did fight with queasiness, constrain'd,  
As men drink potions, that their weapons only  
Seem'd on our side; but, for their spirits and souls,  
This word, rebellion, it had froze them up,  
As fish are in a pond. But now the bishop 200  
Turns insurrection to religion:  
Supposed sincere and holy in his thoughts,  
He's followed both with body and with mind;  
And doth enlarge his rising with the blood  
Of fair King Richard, scraped from Pomfret stones;  
Derives from heaven his quarrel and his cause;  
Tells them he doth bestride a bleeding land,

189-209 *The gentle . . . follow him*] This passage first appeared in the First Folio.

190 *well-appointed*] well equipped.

196 *queasiness*] squeamishness, disgust, qualm.

204-205 *enlarge . . . Richard*] augments the number of his rebel following by carrying about drops of the blood of King Richard as a hallowed relic.

207 *bestride*] stand over so as to protect.



Gasping for life under great Bolingbroke;  
And more and less do flock to follow him.

NORTH. I knew of this before; but, to speak truth, <sup>210</sup>  
This present grief had wiped it from my mind.  
Go in with me; and counsel every man  
The aptest way for safety and revenge:  
Get posts and letters, and make friends with speed:  
Never so few, and never yet more need. [Exeunt.]

## SCENE II—LONDON

## A STREET

*Enter FALSTAFF, with his Page bearing his sword and buckler*

FAL. Sirrah, you giant, what says the doctor to my water?

PAGE. He said, sir, the water itself was a good healthy water; but, for the party that owed it, he might have moe diseases than he knew for.

FAL. Men of all sorts take a pride to gird at me: the brain of this foolish-compounded clay, man, is not able to invent any thing that tends to laughter, more than I invent or is invented on me: I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men. I do here <sup>10</sup> walk before thee like a sow that hath overwhelmed all her litter but one. If the prince put thee into my service for any other reason than to set me off, why then I have

1 *you giant*] an ironical reference to the page's diminutive stature.

*what says the doctor . . . water*] A reference to a common mode of medical diagnosis.

7 *foolish-compounded*] compounded of folly.

13 *set me off*] i. e., by way of contrast or foil.

no judgement. Thou whoreson mandrake, thou art fitter to be worn in my cap than to wait at my heels. I was never manned with an agate till now: but I will inset you neither in gold nor silver, but in vile apparel, and send you back again to your master, for a jewel, — the juvenal, the prince your master, whose chin is not yet fledged. I will sooner have a beard grow in the palm <sup>20</sup> of my hand than he shall get one on his cheek; and yet he will not stick to say his face is a face-royal: God may finish it when he will, 't is not a hair amiss yet: he may keep it still at a face-royal, for a barber shall never earn sixpence out of it; and yet he'll be crowing as if he had writ man ever since his father was a bachelor. He may keep his own grace, but he's almost out of mine, I can assure him. What said Master Dombledon about the satin for my short cloak and my slops?

PAGE. He said, sir, you should procure him better assurance than Bardolph: he would not take his band <sup>30</sup> and yours; he liked not the security.

---

14 *mandrake*] a small plant with a root, thought to resemble the human figure.

16 *agate*] A reference to the miniature figures or heads engraved on agate stones, set in rings and brooches. Cf. *Much Ado*, III, i, 65: "An *agate* very vilely cut."

18 *juvenal*] youth.

21 a *face-royal*] a somewhat lame allusion to the coin known as the royal, worth ten shillings, on which the king's face was stamped. At line 23, where the word is repeated, the meaning is that the prince's face as little requires the barber's attention as the face stamped on the coin.

28 *slops*] broad breeches.

30 *band*] bond.

FAL. Let him be damned, like the glutton ! pray God his tongue be hotter ! A whoreson Achitophel ! a rascally yea-forsooth knave ! to bear a gentleman in hand, and then stand upon security ! The whoreson smooth-pates do now wear nothing but high shoes, and bunches of keys at their girdles ; and if a man is through with them in honest taking up, then they must stand upon security. I had as lief they would put ratsbane in my mouth as offer to stop it with security. I looked a' should <sup>40</sup> have sent me two and twenty yards of satin, as I am a true knight, and he sends me security. Well, he may sleep in security ; for he hath the horn of abundance, and the lightness of his wife shines through it : and yet cannot he see, though he have his own lanthorn to light him. Where's Bardolph ?

PAGE. He's gone into Smithfield to buy your worship a horse.

FAL. I bought him in Paul's, and he'll buy me a  
 32-33 *the glutton . . . hotter*] an allusion to the parable of Dives and Lazarus, *Luke*, xvi, 24, where the rich glutton in the torments of hell-fire begs for water to cool his tongue.

33 *Achitophel*] a scriptural type of a false counsellor.

34 *yea-forsooth knave*] smooth-spoken, oily-mouthed fellow.

*bear . . . in hand*] delude with false promises.

35 *smooth-pates*] sleek-headed men.

37-38 *if a man is through with them in honest taking up*] if a man be in with them, if he transact business with them, in honestly buying on credit.

43-44 *horn of abundance . . . shines through it*] a punning allusion to three kinds of horns, viz., to the "cornucopia" or horn of plenty, to the transparent horned case of a lantern, and to the horns which were believed to grow on dishonoured husbands' heads.

48 *bought him in Paul's*] hired him in the nave of St. Paul's cathedral,

horse in Smithfield: an I could get me but a wife in the stews, I were manned, horsed, and wived.

50

*Enter the LORD CHIEF JUSTICE and Servant*

PAGE. Sir, here comes the nobleman that committed the prince for striking him about Bardolph.

FAL. Wait close; I will not see him.

CH. JUST. What's he that goes there?

SERV. Falstaff, an 't please your lordship.

CH. JUST. He that was in question for the robbery?

SERV. He, my lord: but he hath since done good service at Shrewsbury; and, as I hear, is now going with some charge to the Lord John of Lancaster.

CH. JUST. What, to York? Call him back again.

60

SERV. Sir John Falstaff!

FAL. Boy, tell him I am deaf.

PAGE. You must speak louder; my master is deaf.

CH. JUST. I am sure he is, to the hearing of any thing good. Go, pluck him by the elbow; I must speak with him.

SERV. Sir John!

FAL. What! a young knave, and begging! Is there not wars? is there not employment? doth not the king lack subjects? do not the rebels need soldiers? Though it be a shame to be on any side but one, it is worse shame to beg than to be on the worst side, were it worse than the name of rebellion can tell how to make it.

---

then a crowded promenade for the citizens of London and men seeking employment.

58 *Wait close*] keep out of sight.

59 *some charge*] some commission, in charge of a company of soldiers.

SERV. You mistake me, sir.

FAL. Why, sir, did I say you were an honest man? setting my knighthood and my soldiership aside, I had lied in my throat, if I had said so.

SERV. I pray you, sir, then set your knighthood and your soldiership aside; and give me leave to tell you, you lie in your throat, if you say I am any other than an honest man. 80

FAL. I give thee leave to tell me so! I lay aside that which grows to me! If thou gettest any leave of me, hang me; if thou takest leave, thou wert better be hanged. You hunt counter: hence! avaunt!

SERV. Sir, my lord would speak with you.

CH. JUST. Sir John Falstaff, a word with you.

FAL. My good lord! God give your lordship good time of day. I am glad to see your lordship abroad: I heard say your lordship was sick: I hope your lordship goes abroad by advice. Your lordship, though not clean past your youth, hath yet some smack of age in you, some relish of the saltiness of time; and I most humbly beseech your lordship to have a reverend care of your health. 90

CH. JUST. Sir John, I sent for you before your expedition to Shrewsbury.

FAL. An't please your lordship, I hear his majesty is returned with some discomfort from Wales.

---

82 *that which grows to me*] the knighthood and soldiership, which adhere to me. See lines 78-79.

85 *You hunt counter*] You are on the wrong scent.

93 *saltiness*] seasoning.

98 *discomfort*] anxiety.

CH. JUST. I talk not of his majesty: you would not come when I sent for you. 100

FAL. And I hear, moreover, his highness is fallen into this same whoreson apoplexy.

CH. JUST. Well, God mend him! I pray you, let me speak with you.

FAL. This apoplexy is, as I take it, a kind of lethargy, an 't please your lordship; a kind of sleeping in the blood, a whoreson tingling.

CH. JUST. What tell you me of it? be it as it is.

FAL. It hath it original from much grief, from study and perturbation of the brain: I have read the cause of his effects in Galen: it is a kind of deafness. 111

CH. JUST. I think you are fallen into the disease; for you hear not what I say to you.

FAL. Very well, my lord, very well: rather, an't please you, it is the disease of not listening, the malady of not marking, that I am troubled withal.

CH. JUST. To punish you by the heels would amend the attention of your ears; and I care not if I do become your physician. 119

FAL. I am as poor as Job, my lord, but not so patient: your lordship may minister the potion of imprisonment to me in respect of poverty; but how I should be

---

114-116 *Very well . . . withal*] In the Quarto this speech is assigned to a character indicated *Old*. This is another relic of the name Sir John Oldcastle, which Falstaff bore in Shakespeare's first draft of the play, and which crept by error into the manuscript of this piece. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, ii, 40: "my *old* lad of the *castle*," and *Epilogue*, 29-30, *infra*, "*Oldcastle* died a martyr."

117 *To punish you by the heels*] To set you in the stocks.

your patient to follow your prescriptions, the wise may make some dram of a scruple, or indeed a scruple itself.

CH. JUST. I sent for you, when there were matters against you for your life, to come speak with me.

FAL. As I was then advised by my learned counsel in the laws of this land-service, I did not come.

CH. JUST. Well, the truth is, Sir John, you live in great infamy. 130

FAL. He that buckles him in my belt cannot live in less.

CH. JUST. Your means are very slender, and your waste is great.

FAL. I would it were otherwise; I would my means were greater, and my waist slenderer.

CH. JUST. You have misled the youthful prince.

FAL. The young prince hath misled me: I am the fellow with the great belly, and he my dog.

CH. JUST. Well, I am loath to gall a new-healed wound: your day's service at Shrewsbury hath a little gilded over your night's exploit on Gadshill: you may thank the unquiet time for your quiet o'er-posting that action. 142

FAL. My lord?

CH. JUST. But since all is well, keep it so: wake not a sleeping wolf.

127-128 *my learned counsel . . . land-service*] one well acquainted with the annoying conditions or procedure of lawsuits of this kind.

138 *fellow . . . dog*] a dog commonly led about helpless old men, but there may be a reference to some well known beggar of the day — notably fat and blind — who was led about by a dog.

142 *your quiet o'er-posting*] your quietly getting clear of. Cf. 2 *Hen. VI*, III, i, 255: "His guilt should be but idly *posted over*."

FAL. To wake a wolf is as bad as to smell a fox.

CH. JUST. What! you are as a candle, the better part burnt out.

FAL. A wassail candle, my lord, all tallow: if I did say of wax, my growth would approve the truth. 150

CH. JUST. There is not a white hair on your face but should have his effect of gravity.

FAL. His effect of gravy, gravy, gravy.

CH. JUST. You follow the young prince up and down, like his ill angel.

FAL. Not so, my lord; your ill angel is light; but I hope he that looks upon me will take me without weighing: and yet, in some respects, I grant, I cannot go: I cannot tell. Virtue is of so little regard in these costermonger times that true valor is turned bear herd: pregnancy is made a tapster, and hath his quick wit wasted in giving reckonings: all the other gifts appertinent to man, as the malice of this age shapes them, are not worth a gooseberry. You that are old consider not the capacities of us that are young; you do measure the

---

149 *A wassail candle*] A large candle used at festivals.

150 *of wax*] a pun on the word in the sense of "increase."

156 *your ill angel is light*] a quibble on the use of the word "angel" in the sense of the familiar coin (worth ten shillings); there is also a quibble on the word "light," which means not only "light in weight" (applied especially to bad coins) but "wanton."

158-159 *I cannot go . . . tell*] A continuation of the jest on the lightness of a bad coin: I cannot pass current: I cannot count as good weight.

159 *in these costermonger times*] in these mercenary times.

160 *bear-herd*] keeper of a tame bear.

*pregnancy*] readiness of intellect, mental cleverness.



heat of our livers with the bitterness of your galls: and we that are in the vaward of our youth, I must confess, are wags too. 167

CH. JUST. Do you set down your name in the scroll of youth, that are written down old with all the characters of age? Have you not a moist eye? a dry hand? a yellow cheek? a white beard? a decreasing leg? an increasing belly? is not your voice broken? your wind short? your chin double? your wit single? and every part about you blasted with antiquity? and will you yet call yourself young? Fie, fie, fie, Sir John! 175

FAL. My lord, I was born about three of the clock in the afternoon, with a white head and something a round belly. For my voice, I have lost it with halloing and singing of anthems. To approve my youth further, I will not: the truth is, I am only old in judgement and understanding; and he that will caper with me for a thousand marks, let him lend me the money, and have at him. For the box of the ear that the prince gave you, he gave it like a rude prince, and you took it like a sensible lord. I have checked him for it, and the young lion repents; marry, not in ashes and sackcloth, but in new silk and old sack. 186

165 *livers*] passions: the liver was believed to be the seat of the passions.

166 *with the bitterness of your galls*] with your bilious asperities.  
*vaward*] van, heyday.

169 *characters*] characteristics, marks.

173 *your wit single?*] your wit feeble? Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, II, iv, 64-65:  
 "O single-soled jest, solely singular for the singleness!" (i. e.,  
 tenuity). "Single beer" is occasionally found in the sense of small  
 or watery beer.

185-186 *marry . . . old sack*] These words are clearly spoken aside.

CH. JUST. Well, God send the prince a better companion!

FAL. God send the companion a better prince! I cannot rid my hands of him. 190

CH. JUST. Well, the king hath severed you and Prince Harry: I hear you are going with Lord John of Lancaster against the Archbishop and the Earl of Northumberland.

FAL. Yea; I thank your pretty sweet wit for it. But look you pray, all you that kiss my lady Peace at home, that our armies join not in a hot day; for, by the Lord, I take but two shirts out with me, and I mean not to sweat extraordinarily: if it be a hot day, and I brandish any thing but a bottle, I would I might never spit white again. There is not a dangerous action can peep out his head, but I am thrust upon it: well, I cannot last ever: but it was alway yet the trick of our English nation, if they have a good thing, to make it too common. If ye will needs say I am an old man, you should give me rest. I would to God my name were not so terrible to the enemy as it is: I were better to be eaten to death with a rust than to be scoured to nothing with perpetual motion.

196 *join*] come into action.

199 *never spit white again*] To spit white was reckoned by some Elizabethan writers as a sign of health, by others as a mark of thirst. But the phrase is now commonly applied to the effects on the palate of excessive drinking, and it is probable that Falstaff is threatening to forego further opportunity of free potations.

201-207 *but it was . . . motion*] This passage appears only in the Quarto; it was omitted from the Folios.

CH. JUST. Well, be honest, be honest; and God bless your expedition! 209

FAL. Will your lordship lend me a thousand pound to furnish me forth?

CH. JUST. Not a penny, not a penny; you are too impatient to bear crosses. Fare you well: commend me to my cousin Westmoreland. [*Exeunt Chief Justice and Servant.*]

FAL. If I do, fillip me with a three-man beetle. A man can no more separate age and covetousness than a' can part young limbs and lechery: but the gout galls the one, and the pox pinches the other; and so both the degrees prevent my curses. Boy!

PAGE. Sir? 220

FAL. What money is in my purse?

PAGE. Seven groats and two pence.

FAL. I can get no remedy against this consumption of

213 *to bear crosses*] For the quibble on the two meanings of the phrase, viz., "endure hardship" and "carry coins," specifically known as "crosses," cf. *As you like it*, II, iv, 10: "I should bear no cross, if I did bear you."

215 *fillip me . . . beetle*] kill me outright; jerk or flip me with the heaviest of mallets. A three-man beetle was a large mallet or rammer with three handles, used for pile driving. According to an unsupported allegation of Steevens, Warwickshire boys played a game called "filliping the toad" — a sort of "tip-cat" — to which Steevens detected a reference here. According to Steevens, a piece of wood being balanced across a short log, a toad was placed at one end while the other end was sharply struck by a bat or mallet, so that the toad was tossed high in the air, falling down dead.

218-219 *both the degrees . . . curses*] both the steps or stages of life (age and youth) anticipate or justify my curses. Dyce substituted for *degrees* (which is the original reading) the word *diseases*.

the purse: borrowing only lingers and lingers it out, but the disease is incurable. Go bear this letter to my Lord of Lancaster; this to the prince; this to the Earl of Westmoreland; and this to old Mistress Ursula, whom I have weekly sworn to marry since I perceived the first white hair on my chin. About it: you know where to find me. [*Exit Page.*] A pox of this gout! or, a gout of this pox! for the one or the other plays the rogue with my great toe. 'Tis no matter if I do halt; I have the wars for my colour, and my pension shall seem the more reasonable. A good wit will make use of any thing: I will turn diseases to commodity. [*Exit.* 235

## SCENE III—YORK

## THE ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE

*Enter the ARCHBISHOP, the LORDS HASTINGS, MOWBRAY, and  
BARDOLPH*

ARCH. Thus have you heard our cause and known  
our means;

And, my most noble friends, I pray you all,  
Speak plainly your opinions of our hopes:  
And first, lord marshal, what say you to it?

MOWB. I well allow the occasion of our arms;  
But gladly would be better satisfied  
How in our means we should advance ourselves  
To look with forehead bold and big enough  
Upon the power and puissance of the king.

224 *lingers and lingers it out*] prolongs the malady unconscionably.

235 *commodity*] profit.

5 *well allow*] fully admit.

HAST. Our present musters grow upon the file 10  
 To five and twenty thousand men of choice;  
 And our supplies live largely in the hope  
 Of great Northumberland, whose bosom burns  
 With an incensed fire of injuries.

L. BARD. The question then, Lord Hastings, stand-  
 eth thus;  
 Whether our present five and twenty thousand  
 May hold up head without Northumberland?

HAST. With him, we may.

L. BARD. Yea, marry, there's the point:  
 But if without him we be thought too feeble,  
 My judgement is, we should not step too far 20  
 Till we had his assistance by the hand;  
 For in a theme so bloody-faced as this  
 Conjecture, expectation, and surmise  
 Of aids incertain should not be admitted.

ARCH. 'Tis very true, Lord Bardolph; for indeed  
 It was young Hotspur's case at Shrewsbury.

L. BARD. It was, my lord; who lined himself with  
 hope,  
 Eating the air on promise of supply,  
 Flattering himself in project of a power  
 Much smaller than the smallest of his thoughts: 30

---

10 *upon the file*] on the roll.

14 *an incensed fire of injuries*] a fire kindled by wrongs.

17 *hold up head*] maintain an attack.

21-24 *Till . . . admitted*] These lines are omitted in the Quarto.

27 *lined*] stiffened, strengthened; the figure is drawn from the lining of  
 a garment.

30 *Much smaller*] Which proved much smaller.

And so, with great imagination  
 Proper to madmen, led his powers to death,  
 And winking leap'd into destruction.

HAST. But, by your leave, it never yet did hurt  
 To lay down likelihoods and forms of hope.

L. BARD. Yes, if this present quality of war,  
 Indeed the instant action: a cause on foot,  
 Lives so in hope, as in an early spring  
 We see the appearing buds; which to prove fruit,  
 Hope gives not so much warrant as despair 40  
 That frosts will bite them. When we mean to build,  
 We first survey the plot, then draw the model;  
 And when we see the figure of the house,

36-55 *Yes, if . . . or else*] These lines are omitted in the Quarto.

36-39 *Yes . . . appearing buds*] Thus the Folios. But the reading is quite unintelligible. Lord Bardolph clearly intends to argue that in certain conditions of warfare hope of success is dangerous, and is as liable to be blighted as buds in an early spring by frost. Two modes of emending the passage are possible. (1) In line 36 (*Yes if . . . war*), substitute *in* for *if*, place a semicolon instead of a comma after *war*, while in line 37 (*Indeed the instant . . . on foot*), delete the colon after *action*, and make *a cause on foot* a parenthesis. Then Lord Bardolph's words would mean: Yes (hope is dangerous) in this present sort or connection of warfare; indeed, any impending action, when war is once declared, merely relies on hope to the same extent as buds of an early spring, which there is every likelihood frost will destroy. (2) In line 37 for *Indeed* read *Induced*, and omit the comma after *foot*. Then Bardolph would mean: Yes (hope is a danger), if momentary military conditions induce precipitate action. A war once begun relies on hope merely with the assurance of early buds, &c. The first of these conjectures seems preferable.

42 *plot . . . model*] site . . . plan.

Then must we rate the cost of the erection;  
Which if we find outweighs ability,  
What do we then but draw anew the model  
In fewer offices, or at least desist  
To build at all? Much more, in this great work,  
Which is almost to pluck a kingdom down  
And set another up, should we survey 50  
The plot of situation and the model,  
Consent upon a sure foundation,  
Question surveyors, know our own estate,  
How able such a work to undergo,  
To weigh against his opposite; or else  
We fortify in paper and in figures,  
Using the names of men instead of men:  
Like one that draws the model of a house  
Beyond his power to build it; who, half through,  
Gives o'er and leaves his part-created cost 60  
A naked subject to the weeping clouds,  
And waste for churlish winter's tyranny.

HAST. Grant that our hopes, yet likely of fair  
birth,  
Should be still-born, and that we now possess'd  
The utmost man of expectation,

47 *In fewer offices*] with fewer apartments.

52 *Consent*] Agree.

53 *estate*] means.

55 *To weigh . . . opposite*] Taking into consideration both sides of the question; setting the likelihood that we are able to go through with the undertaking against the possibility of failing in it.  
*or else*] otherwise.

61 *A naked subject to*] a subject exposed to.

I think we are a body strong enough,  
Even as we are, to equal with the king.

L. BARD. What, is the king but five and twenty  
thousand?

HAST. To us no more; nay, not so much, Lord  
Bardolph.

For his divisions, as the times do brawl, 70  
Are in three heads: one power against the French,  
And one against Glendower; perforce a third  
Must take up us: so is the unfirm king  
In three divided; and his coffers sound  
With hollow poverty and emptiness.

ARCH. That he should draw his several strengths  
together  
And come against us in full puissance,  
Need not be dreaded.

HAST. If he should do so,  
He leaves his back unarm'd, the French and Welsh  
Baying him at the heels: never fear that. 80

L. BARD. Who is it like should lead his forces  
hither?

HAST. The Duke of Lancaster and Westmoreland;

69 *To us*] As for as we know.

71 *against the French*] During Glendower's rebellion a French army of  
twelve thousand men landed at Milford Haven in his support.

73 *take up*] cope with.

82 *The Duke of Lancaster*] This is an inaccuracy. The reference is to  
Prince John of Lancaster, Prince Henry's younger brother, who  
was created Duke of Bedford long after these events, in the second  
year of Henry V's reign. Prince Henry ("Harry Monmouth")  
was the Duke of Lancaster of this period.



Against the Welsh, himself and Harry Monmouth:  
But who is substituted 'gainst the French,  
I have no certain notice.

ARCH.

Let us on,

And publish the occasion of our arms.

The commonwealth is sick of their own choice;

Their over-greedy love hath surfeited:

An habitation giddy and unsure

Hath he that buildeth on the vulgar heart.

90

O thou fond many, with what loud applause

Didst thou beat heaven with blessing Bolingbroke,

Before he was what thou wouldst have him be!

And being now trimm'd in thine own desires,

Thou, beastly feeder, art so full of him,

That thou provokest thyself to cast him up.

So, so, thou common dog, didst thou disgorge

Thy glutton bosom of the royal Richard;

And now thou wouldst eat thy dead vomit up,

And howl'st to find it. What trust is in these times? 100

They that, when Richard lived, would have him  
die,

Are now become enamour'd on his grave:

Thou, that threw'st dust upon his goodly head

When through proud London he came sighing on

After the admired heels of Bolingbroke,

Criest now "O earth, yield us that king again,

85-108 *Let us . . . worst*] The whole speech of the Archbishop is  
omitted from the Quarto.

91 *fond many*] foolish multitude.

92 *beat heaven*] shout to the vault of heaven.

94 *trimm'd . . . desires*] decked out, equipped as you wished.

---

And take thou this!" O thoughts of men accursed!  
Past and to come seems best; things present, worst. 108

MOWB. Shall we go draw our numbers, and set on?

HAST. We are time's subjects, and time bids be gone.

[*Exeunt.*]

---

109 *draw our numbers*] assemble our forces.

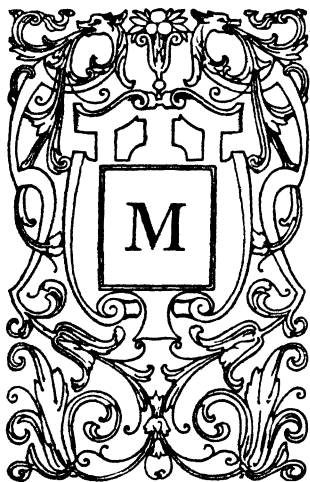


## ACT SECOND — SCENE I — LONDON

### A STREET

*Enter Hostess, FANG and his Boy with her, and SNARE following*

HOSTESS



MASTER FANG, HAVE YOU entered the action?

FANG. It is entered.

HOST. Where's your yeoman? Is 't a lusty yeoman? will a' stand to 't?

FANG. Sirrah, where's Snare?

HOST. O Lord, ay! good Master Snare.

SNARE. Here, here.

FANG. Snare, we must arrest Sir John Falstaff.

HOST. Yea, good Master Snare; I have entered him and all.

10

SNARE. It may chance cost some of us our lives, for he will stab.

3 yeoman] attendant on the sheriff's officer, the bailiff's man.

HOST. Alas the day! take heed of him; he stabbed me in mine own house, and that most beastly: in good faith, he cares not what mischief he does, if his weapon be out: he will foin like any devil; he will spare neither man, woman, nor child.

FANG. If I can close with him, I care not for his thrust.

HOST. No, nor I neither: I'll be at your elbow.

FANG. An I but fist him once; an a' come but within my vice, —

HOST. I am undone by his going; I warrant you, he's an infinitive thing upon my score. Good Master Fang, hold him sure: good Master Snare, let him not 'scape. A' comes continuantly to Pie-corner — saving your manhoods — to buy a saddle; and he is indited to dinner to the Lubber's-head in Lumbert street, to Master Smooth's the silkman: I pray ye, since my exion is entered and my case so openly known to the world, let him be brought in to his answer. A hundred mark is a long one for a poor lone woman to bear: and I have borne, and borne, and borne; and have been fubbed off, and

16 *foin*] thrust.

21 *vice*] grip, clutch.

22 *going*] procedure.

23 *infinitive*] a blunder for infinite, *i. e.*, endless.

25 *saving your manhoods*] a farcical apology for mentioning so humble a locality.

26 *indited*] a blunder for invited.

27 *Lubber's-head in Lumbert street*] Leopard's-head in Lombard street.

28 *exion*] blunder for action (at law).

30 *A hundred mark . . . one*] An unpaid bill of a hundred marks is a long reckoning.

32 *fubbed off*] put off with excuses.

fubbed off, and fubbed off, from this day to that day, that it is a shame to be thought on. There is no honesty in such dealing; unless a woman should be made an ass and a beast, to bear every knave's wrong. Yonder he comes; and that arrant malmsey-nose knave, Bardolph, with him. Do your offices, do your offices: Master Fang and Master Snare, do me, do me, do me your offices.

*Enter FALSTAFF, Page, and BARDOLPH*

FAL. How now! whose mare's dead? what's the 40 matter?

FANG. Sir John, I arrest you at the suit of Mistress Quickly.

FAL. Away, varlets! Draw, Bardolph: cut me off the villain's head: throw the quean in the channel.

HOST. Throw me in the channel! I'll throw thee in the channel. Wilt thou? wilt thou? thou bastardly rogue! Murder, murder! Ah, thou honey-suckle villain! wilt thou kill God's officers and the king's? Ah, thou honey-seed rogue! thou art a honey-seed, a man- 50 queller, and a woman-queller.

FAL. Keep them off, Bardolph.

FANG. A rescue! a rescue!

HOST. Good people, bring a rescue or two. Thou

37 *malmsey-nose*] a nose reddened with drinking malmsey wine.

40 *whose mare's dead?*] a comic colloquialism for "what's up?"

45 *quean . . . channel*] jade . . . gutter.

47 *bastardly*] blunder for "dastardly."

48 *honey-suckle*] blunder for "homicidal," like "honey-seed" in line 50.

50 *a man-queller*] a man-killer. The word, though something of an archaism, is found in contemporary literature.

wo't, wo't thou? thou wo't, wo't ta? do, do, thou rogue! do, thou hemp-seed!

PAGE. Away, you scullion! you rampallian! you fustilarian! I'll tickle your catastrophe.

*Enter the LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, and his men*

CH. JUST. What is the matter? keep the peace here, ho!

HOST. Good my lord, be good to me. I beseech you, 60 stand to me.

CH. JUST. How now, Sir John! what are you brawling here?

Doth this become your place, your time and business? You should have been well on your way to York. Stand from him, fellow: wherefore hang'st upon him?

HOST. O my most worshipful lord, an 't please your grace, I am a poor widow of Eastcheap, and he is arrested at my suit.

CH. JUST. For what sum?

HOST. It is more than for some, my lord; it is for all, 70 all I have. He hath eaten me out of house and home; he hath put all my substance into that fat belly of his:

55 *thou wo't, wo't ta?*] you will, will you?

56 *hemp-seed*] gallows-bird.

57 *rampallian*] riotous strumpet; a term of abuse employed by other writers of the day.

*fustilarian*] a word of similar significance; it is not found elsewhere, though "fustilugs" was occasionally applied to a fat person. It is probably a burlesque composite, crudely echoing the form "rampallian," of fusty, *i. e.*, mouldy fustian, *i. e.*, coarse cotton stuff.

Cf. II, iv, 179, *infra*: "*fustian rascal*."

58 *catastrophe*] posterior.

but I will have some of it out again, or I will ride thee o' nights like the mare.

FAL. I think I am as like to ride the mare, if I have any vantage of ground to get up.

CH. JUST. How comes this, Sir John? Fie! what man of good temper would endure this tempest of exclamation? Are you not ashamed to enforce a poor widow to so rough a course to come by her own?

80

FAL. What is the gross sum that I owe thee?

HOST. Marry, if thou wert an honest man, thyself and the money too. Thou didst swear to me upon a parcel-gilt goblet, sitting in my Dolphin-chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, upon Wednesday in Wheeson week, when the prince broke thy head for liking his father to a singing-man of Windsor, thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me and make me my lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in 90

74-75 *like the mare . . . ride the mare*] The hostess means by mare "nightmare." Falstaff's obscene retort takes cognizance of the circumstance that "to ride the mare" was a slang term for "to ascend the gallows."

83-84 *parcel-gilt*] gilt in parts. The embossed portions of a goblet of silver, pewter, or other metal were often gilded.

84 *Dolphin-chamber*] For the practice of naming tavern rooms in this fashion cf. *1 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 26 and note.

85 *Wheeson*] blunder for "Whitsun."

86 *liking*] blunder for "likening."

90 *goodwife Keech*] "Keech" is the technical term of a roll of tallow prepared by butchers for the chandler. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 221 and note.

then and call me gossip Quickly? coming in to borrow a mess of vinegar; telling us she had a good dish of prawns; whereby thou didst desire to eat some; whereby I told thee they were ill for a green wound? And didst thou not, when she was gone down stairs, desire me to be no more so familiarity with such poor people; saying that ere long they should call me madam? And didst thou not kiss me and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings? I put thee now to thy book-oath: deny it, <sup>99</sup> if thou canst.

FAL. My lord, this is a poor mad soul; and she says up and down the town that her eldest son is like you: she hath been in good case, and the truth is, poverty hath distracted her. But for these foolish officers, I beseech you I may have redress against them.

CH. JUST. Sir John, Sir John, I am well acquainted with your manner of wrenching the true cause the false way. It is not a confident brow, nor the throng of words that come with such more than impudent sauciness from you, can thrust me from a level consideration: you have, as it appears to me, practised upon the easy-yielding spirit of this woman, and made her serve your uses both in purse and in person. 112

HOST. Yea, in truth, my lord.

CH. JUST. Pray thee, peace. Pay her the debt you owe her, and unpay the villany you have done her: the

91 *mess*] small quantity.

96 *familiarity*] Thus the Quarto. The Folios correct the word to *familiar*.

99 *book-oath*] bible-oath, oath sworn on the bible.

102 *in good case*] in a good position, well off.

109 *a level consideration*] an impartial point of view.



one you may do with sterling money, and the other with current repentance.

FAL. My lord, I will not undergo this sneap without reply. You call honourable boldness impudent sauciness: if a man will make courtesy and say nothing, he is virtuous: no, my lord, my humble duty remembered, I will not be your suitor. I say to you, I do desire deliverance from these officers, being upon hasty employment in the king's affairs. 124

CH. JUST. You speak as having power to do wrong: but answer in the effect of your reputation, and satisfy the poor woman.

FAL. Come hither, hostess.

*Enter GOWER*

CH. JUST. Now, Master Gower, what news?

Gow. The king, my lord, and Harry Prince of Wales are near at hand: the rest the paper tells. 131

FAL. As I am a gentleman.

HOST. Faith, you said so before.

FAL. As I am a gentleman. Come, no more words of it.

HOST. By this heavenly ground I tread on, I must be

---

116-117 *sterling . . . current*] The chief justice seems addicted to numismatic punning. Cf. I, ii, 212-213, *supra*.

118 *undergo this sneap*] submit to this rebuke.

120 *make courtesy*] make signs of subservience.

126 *in the effect of your reputation*] in the manner suitable to your position.

129 *Master Gower*] This messenger is probably the poet Gower, who adhered to Henry IV. The poet figures in another capacity in the play of *Pericles*.

136-137 *I must be fain*] I must be content.

fain to pawn both my plate and the tapestry of my dining-chambers.

138

FAL. Glasses, glasses, is the only drinking: and for thy walls, a pretty slight drollery, or the story of the Prodigal, or the German hunting in water-work, is worth a thousand of these bed-hangings and these fly-bitten tapestries. Let it be ten pound, if thou canst. Come, an 't were not for thy humours, there's not a better wench in England. Go, wash thy face, and draw the action. Come, thou must not be in this humour with me; dost not know me? come, come, I know thou wast set on to this.

HOST. Pray thee, Sir John, let it be but twenty nobles: i' faith, I am loath to pawn my plate, so God save me, la!

FAL. Let it alone; I'll make other shift: you'll be a fool still.

151

139 *Glasses . . . drinking*] Persons of fashion at the time only used cups or tankards of glass; metal drinking cups had gone out of vogue.

140-142 *a pretty . . . bed-hangings*] Falstaff is extolling a new and light fashion of decorating the walls of rooms and deprecating the old-fashioned heavy tapestry. By "water-work" is meant (as opposed to "oil painting") "water colours" or distemper, which might be wrought either on canvas or on wood. "Drollery" is a humorous incident; "the story of the Prodigal" means a sketch of that scriptural tale; "the German hunting" would mean the presentation of a boar hunt.

143 *Let it be ten pound, if thou canst*] The impudent knight is actually extorting a new loan of his victim.

145 *draw*] withdraw.

148 *twenty nobles*] £6 13s. 4d.; a noble was worth 6s. 8d.

HOST. Well, you shall have it, though I pawn my gown. I hope you'll come to supper. You'll pay me all together?

FAL. Will I live? [*To Bardolph*] Go, with her, with her; hook on, hook on.

HOST. Will you have Doll Tearsheet meet you at supper?

FAL. No more words; let's have her.

[*Exeunt Hostess, Bardolph, Officers, and Boy.*]

CH. JUST. I have heard better news. 160

FAL. What's the news, my lord?

CH. JUST. Where lay the king last night?

GOW. At Basingstoke, my lord.

FAL. I hope, my lord, all's well: what is the news, my lord?

CH. JUST. Come all his forces back?

GOW. No; fifteen hundred foot, five hundred horse, Are march'd up to my Lord of Lancaster, Against Northumberland and the Archbishop.

FAL. Comes the king back from Wales, my noble lord?

CH. JUST. You shall have letters of me presently: 171 Come, go along with me, good Master Gower.

FAL. My lord!

CH. JUST. What's the matter?

FAL. Master Gower, shall I entreat you with me to dinner?

GOW. I must wait upon my good lord here; I thank you, good Sir John.

155 *Will I live?*] As sure as life.

156 *hook on*] hold fast to her.

163 *Basingstoke*] The Folios' correction of the Quarto reading *Billingsgate*.

CH. JUST. Sir John, you loiter here too long, being  
you are to take soldiers up in counties as you go. 180

FAL. Will you sup with me, Master Gower?

CH. JUST. What foolish master taught you these  
manners, Sir John?

FAL. Master Gower, if they become me not, he was  
a fool that taught them me. This is the right fencing  
grace, my lord; tap for tap, and so part fair.

CH. JUST. Now the Lord lighten thee! thou art a  
great fool. [Exeunt.]

## SCENE II—LONDON

## ANOTHER STREET

*Enter PRINCE HENRY and POINS*

PRINCE. Before God, I am exceeding weary.

POINS. Is 't come to that? I had thought weariness  
durst not have attached one of so high blood.

PRINCE. Faith, it does me; though it discolours the  
complexion of my greatness to acknowledge it. Doth it  
not show vilely in me to desire small beer?

POINS. Why, a prince should not be so loosely studied  
as to remember so weak a composition.

PRINCE. Belike then my appetite was not princely got;  
for, by my troth, I do now remember the poor creature, 10  
small beer. But, indeed, these humble considerations

179 *being*] seeing that.

187 *lighten*] enlighten.

3 *attached*] seized.

7 *loosely studied*] frivolously disposed.

10–11 *poor creature, small beer*] Cf. *Othello*, II, iii, 299–300: “good wine  
is a good familiar creature.”

make me out of love with my greatness. What a disgrace is it to me to remember thy name! or to know thy face to-morrow! or to take note how many pair of silk stockings thou hast, viz. these, and those that were thy peach-coloured ones! or to bear the inventory of thy shirts; as, one for superfluity, and another for use! But that the tennis-court-keeper knows better than I; for it is a low ebb of linen with thee when thou keepest not racket there; as thou hast not done a great while, because the rest of thy low countries have made a shift to eat up thy holland: and God knows, whether those that bawl out the ruins of thy linen shall inherit his kingdom: but the midwives say the children are not in the fault; whereupon the world increases, and kindreds are mightily strengthened.

20 racket] a pun on a tennis "racquet," and a "racket" in the sense of "disorder."

21-22 low countries . . . holland] a popular geographical jest; "the Netherlands," or "low countries," was jocose slang for the lower part of the body or the posteriors. Cf. *Com. of Errors*, III, ii, 136-137 (of a farcical account of the person of a kitchen-wench): "Where stood Belgia, the *Netherlands*? Oh, sir, I did not look so low." "Holland" or Dutch linen fetched a high price in England. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, III, iii, 70-71: "*holland* of eight shillings an ell." The general sense of the passage would appear to be that Poins's sensual indulgences have cost him his linen underclothes.

22-26 and God knows . . . strengthened] This passage is omitted from the Folios on account of its assumed profanity. It appears only in the Quarto.

24 children] a somewhat incoherent allusion to bastard children with whom the prince jestingly credits Poins. The babies' yells direct attention to their ragged covering.

25 kindreds] families.

POINS. How ill it follows, after you have laboured so hard, you should talk so idly! Tell me, how many good young princes would do so, their fathers being so sick as yours at this time is? 30

PRINCE. Shall I tell thee one thing, Poins?

POINS. Yes, faith; and let it be an excellent good thing.

PRINCE. It shall serve among wits of no higher breeding than thine.

POINS. Go to; I stand the push of your one thing that you will tell.

PRINCE. Marry, I tell thee, it is not meet that I should be sad, now my father is sick: albeit I could tell to thee, as to one it pleases me, for fault of a better, to call my friend, I could be sad, and sad indeed too. 40

POINS. Very hardly upon such a subject.

PRINCE. By this hand, thou thinkest me as far in the devil's book as thou and Falstaff for obduracy and persistency: let the end try the man. But I tell thee, my heart bleeds inwardly that my father is so sick: and keeping such vile company as thou art hath in reason taken from me all ostentation of sorrow.

POINS. The reason?

PRINCE. What wouldst thou think of me, if I should weep? 50

---

28 *you should talk so idly*] A just comment on the prince's frivolous incoherence.

35 *stand the push*] am equal to the thrust. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, III, ii, 66.

43 *in the devil's book*] in the devil's good books. Cf. *Much Ado*, I, i, 64.

47 *ostentation*] show or manifestation. The word in Elizabethan literature lacked the notion of boastfulness, now attaching to the word.

POINS. I would think thee a most princely hypocrite.

PRINCE. It would be every man's thought; and thou art a blessed fellow to think as every man thinks: never a man's thought in the world keeps the road-way better than thine: every man would think me an hypocrite indeed. And what accites your most worshipful thought to think so?

POINS. Why, because you have been so lewd, and so much engrafted to Falstaff.

PRINCE. And to thee.

60

POINS. By this light, I am well spoke on; I can hear it with mine own ears: the worst that they can say of me is that I am a second brother, and that I am a proper fellow of my hands; and those two things, I confess, I cannot help. By the mass, here comes Bardolph.

*Enter BARDOLPH and Page*

PRINCE. And the boy that I gave Falstaff: a' had him from me Christian; and look, if the fat villain have not transformed him ape.

BARD. God save your grace!

70

PRINCE. And yours, most noble Bardolph!

BARD. Come, you virtuous ass, you bashful fool, must you be blushing? wherefore blush you now?

54 *road-way*] beaten track.

56 *accites*] an unusual form of "excites;" cf. V, ii, 141, *infra*, for "accite" in the normal sense of "cite" or "summon."

59 *engrafted*] attached.

64 *a proper . . . hands*] a handsome fellow of my inches. Cf. *M. Wives*, I, iv, 23: "as tall a man of *his hands*."

What a maidenly man-at-arms are you become! Is 't such a matter to get a pottle-pot's maidenhead?

PAGE. A' calls me e'en now, my lord, through a red lattice, and I could discern no part of his face from the window: at last I spied his eyes; and methought he had made two holes in the ale-wife's new petticoat and so peeped through.

80

PRINCE. Has not the boy profited?

BARD. Away, you whoreson upright rabbit, away!

PAGE. Away, you rascally Althæa's dream, away!

PRINCE. Instruct us, boy; what dream, boy?

PAGE. Marry, my lord, Althæa dreamed she was delivered of a fire-brand; and therefore I call him her dream.

PRINCE. A crown's worth of good interpretation: there 't is, boy.

POINS. O, that this good blossom could be kept 90 from cankers! Well, there is sixpence to preserve thee.

76 *a red lattice*] a tavern window. Cf. note in *M. Wives*, II, ii, 23:

"*red-lattice phrases*." Here there is a jest on Bardolph's red nose.

82 *upright*] on its hind legs.

83-86 *Althæa's dream . . . her dream*] Two mythological fables are confused here. Hecuba (not Althæa) dreamt just before the birth of her son Paris that she was delivered of a firebrand which should consume Troy. See Ovid's *Heroides*, xvi, 45-46. Althæa's firebrand belongs to a different myth; on the preservation of a certain firebrand from fire depended the continuance of the life of Althæa's son Meleager of Calydon; the classical fable of "Althæa's brand" is accurately described in 2 *Hen. VI*, I, i, 229-230. Its "*locus classicus*" is Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, viii, 260-547.

91 *cankers*] canker-worms, caterpillars.



BARD. An you do not make him hanged among you, the gallows shall have wrong.

PRINCE. And how doth thy master, Bardolph?

BARD. Well, my lord. He heard of your grace's coming to town: there's a letter for you.

POINS. Delivered with good respect. And how doth the martlemas, your master?

BARD. In bodily health, sir.

99

POINS. Marry, the immortal part needs a physician; but that moves not him: though that be sick, it dies not.

PRINCE. I do allow this wen to be as familiar with me as my dog; and he holds his place; for look you how he writes.

POINS. [*Reads*] "John Falstaff, knight,"—every man must know that, as oft as he has occasion to name himself: even like those that are kin to the king; for they never prick their finger but they say, "There's some of the king's blood spilt." "How comes that?" says he, that takes upon him not to conceive. The answer is as ready as a borrower's cap, "I am the king's poor cousin, sir."

98 *the martlemas*] Martinmas: a reference to the warm summer weather which occasionally distinguishes the date of St. Martin's day, 11 November. Falstaff's gaiety in the winter of his age has already been likened to "Allhallown summer." 1 *Hen. IV*, I, ii, 152. There may be a further reference here to "Martlemas beef." Cf. Marlowe's *Faustus*, II, ii, 151. Cattle were specially fattened for consumption on St. Martin's day. Falstaff has already been called "sweet beef." 1 *Hen. IV*, III, iii, 176.

102 *this wen*] this swollen excrescence of a man.

111 *a borrower's cap*] a borrower's salutation. Theobald's ingenious emendation of the original reading *a borrowed cap*.

PRINCE. Nay, they will be kin to us, or they will fetch it from Japhet. But to the letter: 113

POINS. [*Reads*] "Sir John Falstaff, knight, to the son of the king, nearest his father, Harry Prince of Wales, greeting." Why, this is a certificate.

PRINCE. Peace!

POINS. [*Reads*] "I will imitate the honourable Romans in brevity: " he sure means brevity in breath, short-winded. "I commend me to thee, I commend thee, and I leave thee. Be not too familiar with Poins; for he misuses thy favours so much, that he swears thou art to marry his sister Nell. Repent at idle times as thou mayest; and so, farewell. 123

"Thine, by yea and no, which is as much as to say, as thou usest him, JACK FALSTAFF with my familiars, JOHN with my brothers and sisters, and SIR JOHN with all Europe."

My lord, I'll steep this letter in sack, and make him eat it. 129

PRINCE. That's to make him eat twenty of his words. But do you use me thus, Ned? must I marry your sister?

POINS. God send the wench no worse fortune! But I never said so. 134

PRINCE. Well, thus we play the fools with the time; and the spirits of the wise sit in the clouds and mock us. Is your master here in London?

BARD. Yea, my lord.

PRINCE. Where sups he? doth the old boar feed in the old frank? 140

118 *I will imitate . . . brevity*] A reference to Cæsar's famous despatch, "veni, vidi, vici." Cf. Falstaff's remark, IV, iii, 40-41, *infra*.

140 *frank*] pigsty. Cf. *Rich. III*, I, iii, 314, "*frank'd up*," and note.

BARD. At the old place, my lord, in Eastcheap.

PRINCE. What company?

PAGE. Ephesians, my lord, of the old church.

PRINCE. Sup any women with him?

PAGE. None, my lord, but old Mistress Quickly and Mistress Doll Tearsheet.

PRINCE. What pagan may that be?

PAGE. A proper gentlewoman, sir, and a kinswoman of my master's. 149

PRINCE. Even such kin as the parish heifers are to the town bull. Shall we steal upon them, Ned, at supper?

POINS. I am your shadow, my lord; I'll follow you.

PRINCE. Sirrah, you boy, and Bardolph, no word to your master that I am yet come to town: there's for your silence.

BARD. I have no tongue, sir.

PAGE. And for mine, sir, I will govern it.

PRINCE. Fare you well; go. [*Exeunt Bardolph and Page.*  
This Doll Tearsheet should be some road. 160

POINS. I warrant you, as common as the way between Saint Alban's and London.

PRINCE. How might we see Falstaff bestow himself

143 *Ephesians*] bloods, men of mettle. Cf. *M. Wives*, IV, v, 16, "thine host thine *Ephesian* calls," and *1 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 11, the use of "Corinthian."

160 *road*] prostitute.

163 *bestow himself*] Deport himself, behave, as in *As you like it*, IV, iii, 85-86: "The boy . . . bestows himself like a ripe sister."

to-night in his true colours, and not ourselves be seen?

POINS. Put on two leathern jerkins and aprons, and wait upon him at his table as drawers.

PRINCE From a god to a bull? a heavy descension! it was Jove's case. From a prince to a prentice? a low transformation! that shall be mine; for in every thing the purpose must weigh with the folly. Follow me, Ned. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE III — WARKWORTH

## BEFORE THE CASTLE

*Enter* NORTHUMBERLAND, LADY NORTHUMBERLAND, and  
LADY PERCY

NORTH. I pray thee, loving wife, and gentle daughter,  
Give even way unto my rough affairs:  
Put not you on the visage of the times,  
And be like them to Percy troublesome.

167 *descension*] Thus the Quarto. The Folios read *declension*. There is an obvious reference to the story of Jupiter's surprise of Europa in the shape of a bull, which is told at length in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, ii, 846-876, and is many times referred to by Shakespeare. Cf. *Troil. and Cress.*, V, i, 51: "the goodly transformation of Jupiter."

170 *the purpose . . . folly*] the plan must be governed by the levity inspiring it.

LADY N. I have given over, I will speak no more :  
Do what you will ; your wisdom be your guide.

NORTH. Alas, sweet wife, my honour is at pawn ;  
And, but my going, nothing can redeem it.

LADY P. O yet, for God's sake, go not to these  
wars !

The time was, father, that you broke your word, 10  
When you were more endear'd to it than now ;  
When your own Percy, when my heart's dear Harry,  
Threw many a northward look to see his father  
Bring up his powers ; but he did long in vain.  
Who then persuaded you to stay at home ?  
There were two honours lost, yours and your son's.  
For yours, the God of heaven brighten it !  
For his, it stuck upon him as the sun  
In the grey vault of heaven, and by his light  
Did all the chivalry of England move 20  
To do brave acts : he was indeed the glass  
Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves :  
He had no legs that practised not his gait ;  
And speaking thick, which nature made his blemish,  
Became the accents of the valiant ;  
For those that could speak low and tardily  
Would turn their own perfection to abuse,

11 *more endear'd*] more seriously bound.

21 *glass*] Cf. *Pericles*, I, iv, 27: "Like one another's *glass* to trim them by,"  
and *Hamlet*, III, i, 153: "The *glass* of fashion and the mould of  
form."

23-45 *He had . . . grave*] This passage first appears in the Folios.

24 *speaking thick*] crowding words together.

To seem like him: so that in speech, in gait,  
 In diet, in affections of delight,  
 In military rules, humours of blood, 30  
 He was the mark and glass, copy and book,  
 That fashioned others. And him, O wondrous him!  
 O miracle of men! him did you leave,  
 Second to none, unseconded by you,  
 To look upon the hideous god of war  
 In disadvantage; to abide a field  
 Where nothing but the sound of Hotspur's name  
 Did seem defensible: so you left him.  
 Never, O never, do his ghost the wrong  
 To hold your honour more precise and nice 40  
 With others than with him! let them alone:  
 The marshal and the archbishop are strong:  
 Had my sweet Harry had but half their numbers,  
 To-day might I, hanging on Hotspur's neck,  
 Have talk'd of Monmouth's grave.

NORTH. Beshrew your heart,  
 Fair daughter, you do draw my spirits from me  
 With new lamenting ancient oversights.  
 But I must go and meet with danger there,  
 Or it will seek me in another place  
 And find me worse provided.

31 *the mark and glass*] the example and mirror. Cf. line 21, *supra*, and  
*Lucrece*, 615-616:

"For princes are *the glass, the school, the book*,  
 Where subjects' eyes do learn."

38 *defensible*] able to furnish means of defence, able to meet attack.

40 *To hold . . . nice*] To be more scrupulous in keeping your word.

45 *Monmouth's grave*] Prince Henry's grave. Cf. *Ind.*, 29 and note.

LADY N. O, fly to Scotland, 50  
Till that the nobles and the armed commons  
Have of their puissance made a little taste.

LADY P. If they get ground and vantage of the  
king,  
Then join you with them, like a rib of steel,  
To make strength stronger; but, for all our loves,  
First let them try themselves. So did your son;  
He was so suffer'd: so came I a widow;  
And never shall have length of life enough  
To rain upon remembrance with mine eyes,  
That it may grow and sprout as high as heaven, 60  
For recordation to my noble husband.

NORTH. Come, come, go in with me. 'T is with my  
mind  
As with the tide swell'd up unto his height,  
That makes a still-stand, running neither way:  
Fain would I go to meet the archbishop,  
But many thousand reasons hold me back.  
I will resolve for Scotland: there am I,  
Till time and vantage crave my company. [Exeunt.]

52 *Have . . . taste*] Have made some little test or trial of their power.

53 *get ground and vantage*] gain ground and advantage, get the better.

59 *To rain . . . eyes*] To water his memory.

## SCENE IV — LONDON

*THE BOAR'S-HEAD TAVERN IN EASTCHEAP**Enter two Drawers*

FIRST DRAW. What the devil hast thou brought there? apple-johns? thou knowest Sir John cannot endure an apple-john.

SEC. DRAW. Mass, thou sayest true. The prince once set a dish of apple-johns before him, and told him there were five more Sir Johns; and, putting off his hat, said, "I will now take my leave of these six dry, round, old, withered knights." It angered him to the heart: but he hath forgot that.

FIRST DRAW. Why, then, cover, and set them down: <sup>10</sup> and see if thou canst find out Sneak's noise; Mistress Tearsheet would fain hear some music. Dispatch: the room where they supped is too hot; they'll come in straight.

SEC. DRAW. Sirrah, here will be the prince and Master Poins anon; and they will put on two of our jerkins and aprons; and Sir John must not know of it: Bardolph hath brought word.

<sup>2</sup> *apple-johns*] apples with shrivelled skins. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, III, iii, 4:  
"withered like an old *apple-john*."

<sup>10</sup> *cover*] lay the table.

<sup>11</sup> *noise*] company of musicians.



## THE SECOND PART OF      ACT II

FIRST DRAW. By the mass, here will be old utis: it will be an excellent stratagem. 20

SEC. DRAW. I'll see if I can find out Sneak. [*Exit.*]

*Enter HOSTESS and DOLL TEARSHEET*

HOST. I' faith, sweetheart, methinks now you are in an excellent good temperality: your pulsidge beats as extraordinarily as heart would desire; and your colour, I warrant you, is as red as any rose, in good truth, la! But, i' faith, you have drunk too much canaries; and that's a marvellous searching wine, and it perfumes the blood ere one can say "What's this?" How do you now?

DOL. Better than I was: hem!

30

HOST. Why, that's well said; a good heart's worth gold. Lo, here comes Sir John.

*Enter FALSTAFF*

FAL. [*Singing*] "When Arthur first in court" — Empty the jordan. [*Exit First Drawer.*] — [*Singing*] "And was a worthy king." How now, Mistress Doll!

HOST. Sick of a calm; yea, good faith.

19 *old utis*] fine fun or sport. "Utis" is said to be a form of the French "huitas," *i. e.*, "octave," the eighth day after a church festival, which was often devoted to wild merriment. "Old" is a colloquial intensive.

23 *temperality . . . pulsidge*] temperature . . . pulse; both words belong to the Hostess's peculiar dialect.

33-34 *When Arthur . . . king*] The first two lines of a popular Arthurian ballad, *Sir Launcelot du Lake*, which opens in Percy's *Reliques*: "When Arthur first in court began And was approved king."

36 *calm*] qualm.

FAL. So is all her sect; an they be once in a calm, they are sick.

DOL. You muddy rascal, is that all the comfort you give me?

40

FAL. You make fat rascals, Mistress Doll.

DOL. I make them ! gluttony and diseases make them ; I make them not.

FAL. If the cook help to make the gluttony, you help to make the diseases, Doll : we catch of you, Doll, we catch of you ; grant that, my poor virtue, grant that.

DOL. Yea, joy, our chains and our jewels.

FAL. "Your brooches, pearls, and ouches:" for to serve bravely is to come halting off, you know ; to come off the breach with his pike bent bravely, and to sur- 50 gery bravely ; to venture upon the charged chambers bravely, —

DOL. Hang yourself, you muddy conger, hang yourself !

HOST. By my troth, this is the old fashion ; you two never meet but you fall to some discord : you are both, i' good truth, as rheumatic as two dry toasts ; you cannot one bear with another's confirmities. What the good-

37 *sect*] sex.

48 "*Your brooches . . . ouches*" ] A quotation from some popular song.

"Ouches" were rich jewelled trinkets.

51 *charged chambers*] loaded pieces of ordnance. There is much obscene quibbling here.

52 *conger*] fat conger-eel.

55 *rheumatic*] blunder for choleric, splenetic.

56 *confirmities*] blunder for infirmities.

*What the good-year*] What in good fortune? "Good-year" has been

## THE SECOND PART OF ACT II

---

year! one must bear, and that must be you: you are the weaker vessel, as they say, the emptier vessel.

DOL. Can a weak empty vessel bear such a huge full hogshead? there's a whole merchant's venture of Bourdeaux stuff in him; you have not seen a hulk better stuffed in the hold. Come, I'll be friends with thee, Jack: thou art going to the wars; and whether I shall ever see thee again or no, there is nobody cares.

*Re-enter First Drawer*

FIRST DRAW. Sir, Ancient Pistol's below, and would speak with you.

DOL. Hang him, swaggering rascal! let him not come hither: it is the foul-mouthedst rogue in England.

HOST. If he swagger, let him not come here: no, by my faith; I must live among my neighbours; I'll no swaggerers: I am in good name and fame with the very best: shut the door; there comes no swaggerers here: I have not lived all this while, to have swaggering now: shut the door, I pray you.

FAL. Dost thou hear, hostess?

HOST. Pray ye, pacify yourself, Sir John: there comes no swaggerers here.

FAL. Dost thou hear? it is mine ancient.

HOST. Tilly-fally, Sir John, ne'er tell me: your ancient swaggerer comes not in my doors. I was before 80

interpreted without authority as a corruption of a French word "goujère," the venereal disease. Cf. *M. Wives*, I, iv, 110, and note.  
65 *Ancient*] here the colloquial corruption of "Ensign." Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, IV, ii, 23.

79 *Tilly-fally*] Hoity-toity, fiddle-faddle.

Master Tisick, the deputy, t' other day; and, as he said to me, 't was no longer ago than Wednesday last, "I good faith, neighbour Quickly," says he; Master Dumbe, our minister, was by then; "neighbour Quickly," says he, "receive those that are civil; for," said he, "you are in an ill name:" now a' said so, I can tell whereupon; "for," says he, "you are an honest woman, and well thought on; therefore take heed what guests you receive: receive," says he, "no swaggering companions." There comes none here: you would <sup>90</sup> bless you to hear what he said: no, I'll no swaggerers.

FAL. He's no swaggerer, hostess; a tame cheater, i' faith; you may stroke him as gently as a puppy greyhound: he'll not swagger with a Barbary hen, if her feathers turn back in any show of resistance. Call him up, drawer. [Exit First Drawer.]

HOST. Cheater, call you him? I will bar no honest man my house, nor no cheater: but I do not love

80-81 *Master Tisick, the deputy*] The name implies that the officer (the deputy of the ward) was puffy and short-winded. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, III, iii, 114-115, and note.

83 *Master Dumbe*] This epithet was commonly applied to the clergy, who forbore to preach, and only read homilies prescribed by authority.

92 *a tame cheater*] The expression recalls "the silly cheat," i. e., the silly dupe of *Wint. Tale*, IV, iii, 27. Falstaff is assuring the hostess that Pistol is a harmless fellow. The word "cheater" was often used for a "gamester" without suggestion of dishonesty on his part, but rather for an honest player who was the prey of sharpers. The hostess, 97-98, *infra*, mistakes the word for "escheater," i. e., revenue-officer. In line 131 "cheater" is used in its ordinary modern sense.

94 *Barbary hen*] Cf. *As you like it*, IV, i, 134, "*Barbary cock pigeon*," and note.

swaggering, by my troth; I am the worse, when one says swagger: feel, masters, how I shake; look you, I warrant you. 100

DOL. So you do, hostess.

HOST. Do I? yea, in very truth, do I, an 't were an aspen leaf: I cannot abide swaggerers.

*Enter PISTOL, BARDOLPH, and Page*

PIST. God save you, Sir John!

FAL. Welcome, Ancient Pistol. Here, Pistol, I charge you with a cup of sack: do you discharge upon mine hostess.

PIST. I will discharge upon her, Sir John, with two bullets. 109

FAL. She is pistol-proof, sir; you shall hardly offend her.

HOST. Come, I'll drink no proofs nor no bullets: I'll drink no more than will do me good, for no man's pleasure, I.

PIST. Then to you, Mistress Dorothy; I will charge you.

DOL. Charge me! I scorn you, scurvy companion. What! you poor, base, rascally, cheating, lack-linen mate! Away, you mouldy rogue, away! I am meat for your master.

PIST. I know you, Mistress Dorothy. 119

DOL. Away, you cut-purse rascal! you filthy bung, away! by this wine, I'll thrust my knife in your mouldy chaps, an you play the saucy cuttle with me. Away,

---

120 *bung*] sharper, thief. "To nip a bung" in thieves' language is to "cut a purse" or pick a pocket.

122 *cuttle*] cutpurse; perhaps a reference to "the cuttle-bung," in thieves' language the knife used for slitting purses.

you bottle-ale rascal! you basket-hilt stale juggler, you! Since when, I pray you, sir? God's light, with two points on your shoulder? much!

PIST. God let me not live, but I will murder your ruff for this.

FAL. No more, Pistol; I would not have you go off here: discharge yourself of our company, Pistol. 129

HOST. No, good Captain Pistol; not here, sweet captain.

DOL. Captain! thou abominable damned cheater, art thou not ashamed to be called captain? An captains were of my mind, they would truncheon you out, for taking their names upon you before you have earned them. You a captain! you slave, for what? for tearing a poor whore's ruff in a bawdy-house? He a captain! hang him, rogue! he lives upon mouldy stewed prunes and dried cakes. A captain! God's light, these villains will make the word as odious as the word "occupy;" which was an excellent good word before

123 *basket-hilt stale juggler*] an used-up swordsman.

*Since when*] An exclamation of incredulity.

124 *two points . . . shoulder*] a reference to the epaulettes or shoulder-knots on Pistol's uniform.

126-129 *God . . . Pistol*] The Folios omit this passage save Pistol's words, *I will murder your ruff for this*.

137-138 *he lives . . . cakes*] he lives upon the waste provisions of brothels and pastry shops. For "stewed prunes" cf. *1 Hen. IV*, III, iii, 112, and note.

139 *the word "occupy"*] The word had acquired at the time an obscene sense. Cf. Ben Jonson's *Timber* (ed. Schelling, p. 50): "Many out of their own obscene apprehensions refuse proper and fit words; as *occupy*."

it was ill sorted: therefore captains had need look to 't.

141

BARD. Pray thee, go down, good ancient.

FAL. Hark thee hither, Mistress Doll.

PIST. Not I: I tell thee what, Corporal Bardolph, I could tear her: I'll be revenged of her.

PAGE. Pray thee, go down.

PIST. I'll see her damned first; to Pluto's damned lake, by this hand, to the infernal deep, with Erebus and tortures vile also. Hold hook and line, say I. Down, down, dogs! down, faitors! Have we not Hiren here?

151

HOST. Good Captain Peesel, be quiet; 't is very late, i' faith: I beseech you now, aggravate your choler.

PIST. These be good humours, indeed! Shall pack-horses,  
And hollow pamper'd jades of Asia,

149 *Hold hook and line*] An irrelevant quotation from an old fishing song.

150 *faitors*] traitors, rascals, evil-doers.

*Have we not Hiren here?*] A slang interrogation frequently met with in the Elizabethan drama. It is probably a scrap of bombast from a lost play by George Peele, entitled *The Turkish Mahomet and the fair Greek Hiren* (where Hiren stands for Irene). Here apparently Pistol associates the word "Hiren" with "iron," and touches his sword. When he repeats the phrase at line 165, the hostess interprets the word as "siren," or loose woman, in which sense it is occasionally found in contemporary literature.

155-156 *And hollow . . . day*] A parody on lines in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great*, Part II, IV, iv, 1-2. "Holla, ye pampered jades of Asia! What! can ye draw but twenty miles a day?" Marlowe's "jades" were the kings who were yoked like horses to Tamburlaine's chariot.

Which cannot go but thirty mile a day,  
 Compare with Cæsars, and with Cannibals,  
 And Trojan Greeks? nay, rather damn them with  
 King Cerberus; and let the welkin roar.

Shall we fall foul for toys? 160

HOST. By my troth, captain, these are very bitter words.

BARD. Be gone, good ancient: this will grow to a  
 brawl anon.

PIST. Die men like dogs! give crowns like pins!  
 Have we not Hiren here?

HOST. O' my word, captain, there's none such here.  
 What the good-year! do you think I would deny her?  
 For God's sake, be quiet.

PIST. Then feed, and be fat, my fair Calipolis. Come,  
 give's some sack. 170

"Si fortune me tormente, sperato me contento."

Fear we broadsides? no, let the fiend give fire:  
 Give me some sack: and, sweetheart, lie thou there.

[*Laying down his sword.*]

Come we to full points here; and are etceteras nothing?

157 *Cannibals*] Blunder for "Hannibals." Conversely, Elbow, in *Meas. for Meas.*, II, i, 170, speaks of "Harnibal" where he means "cannibal."

167 *What the good-year!*] See line 56, *supra*, and note.

169 *Then feed . . . Calipolis*] A parody on two lines from Peele's play, *The Battle of Alcazar* (1594), Act II, Sc. iii: "Feed then and faint not, *fair Calipolis*, . . . *Feed and be fat*, that we may meet the foe."

171 "*Si fortune . . . contento*" ] A misreading of an Italian jingling proverb, which should read, "*Si fortuna me tormenta, la speranza me contenta*" (If fortune torment me, hope contents me). Pistol quotes the words again, V, v, 97, *infra*.

174 *Come we . . . nothing?*] Shall we finish here and have no supplementary merriment. "Full points" are full stops.



FAL. Pistol, I would be quiet.

PIST. Sweet knight, I kiss thy neaf: what! we have seen the seven stars.

DOL. For God's sake, thrust him down stairs: I cannot endure such a fustian rascal.

PIST. Thrust him down stairs! know we not Galloway nags? 181

FAL. Quoit him down, Bardolph, like a shove-groat shilling: nay, an a' do nothing but speak nothing, a' shall be nothing here.

BARD. Come, get you down stairs.

PIST. What! shall we have incision? shall we imbrue? [Snatching up his sword.]

Then death rock me asleep, abridge my doleful days!

Why, then, let grievous, ghastly, gaping wounds

Untwine the Sisters Three! Come, Atropos, I say!

176 *neaf*] fist; a north country word.

176-177 *we have seen the seven stars*] we have rioted together by starlight. The "seven stars" are the Pleiades, or Charles' wain.

179 *a fustian rascal*] a ranting rogue.

180 *Galloway nags*] the poorest breed of hackney horses.

182 *Quoit him . . . shove-groat shilling*] Pitch him down like a shove-groat shilling, i. e., the broad shilling piece which was commonly used in the popular game of shovel-board, a rudimentary form of bagatelle. See note on *M. Wives*, I, i, 139, where the same coins are called "Edward shovel-boards." The epithet "shove-groat" is supposed to preserve an allusion to the fact that, before the introduction of shilling pieces, groat pieces were the ordinary counters on the shovel-board.

186 *imbrue*] draw blood.

187 *Then death . . . asleep*] a quotation from a popular song, attributed to Anne Boleyn.

189 *Untwine . . . I say!*] The reference is to the Three Fates, of whom

HOST. Here's goodly stuff toward!

190

FAL. Give me my rapier, boy.

DOL. I pray thee, Jack, I pray thee, do not draw.

FAL. Get you down stairs.

[*Drawing, and driving Pistol out.*]

HOST. Here's a goodly tumult! I'll forswear keeping house, afore I'll be in these terrors and frights. So; murder, I warrant now. Alas, alas! put up your naked weapons, put up your naked weapons.

[*Exeunt Pistol and Bardolph.*]

DOL. I pray thee, Jack, be quiet; the rascal's gone. Ah, you whoreson little valiant villain, you!

HOST. Are you not hurt i' the groin? methought a' made a shrewd thrust at your belly.

201

*Re-enter BARDOLPH*

FAL. Have you turned him out o' doors?

BARD. Yea, sir. The rascal's drunk: you have hurt him, sir, i' the shoulder.

FAL. A rascal! to brave me!

DOL. Ah, you sweet little rogue, you! Alas, poor ape, how thou sweatest! come, let me wipe thy face; come on, you whoreson chops: ah, rogue! i' faith, I love thee: thou art as valorous as Hector of Troy, worth

Atropos filled the office of cutting the thread of human life. Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, V, i, 327-328: "O sisters three, Come, come to me."

190 *Here's goodly stuff toward!*] Here's fine trouble coming.

195 *terrors*] perhaps "terrors;" like "worrits" for worries.

201 *shrewd*] bad, grievous.

208 *chops*] fat-chops. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, ii, 131.

five of Agamemnon, and ten times better than the Nine Worthies: ah, villain! 211

FAL. A rascally slave! I will toss the rogue in a blanket.

DOL. Do, an thou darest for thy heart: an thou dost, I'll canvass thee between a pair of sheets.

*Enter Music*

PAGE. The music is come, sir.

FAL. Let them play. Play, sirs. Sit on my knee, Doll. A rascal bragging slave! the rogue fled from me like quicksilver. 219

DOL. I' faith, and thou followedst him like a church. Thou whoreson little tidy Bartholomew boar-pig, when wilt thou leave fighting o' days and foining o' nights, and begin to patch up thine old body for heaven?

*Enter, behind, PRINCE HENRY and POINS, disguised*

FAL. Peace, good Doll! do not speak like a death's-head; do not bid me remember mine end.

DOL. Sirrah, what humour's the prince of?

FAL. A good shallow young fellow: a' would have made a good pantler, a' would ha' chipped bread well.

DOL. They say Poins has a good wit. 229

FAL. He a good wit? hang him, baboon! his wit's

210 *the Nine Worthies*] See *L. L. L.*, V, i, 102, and note.

221 *tidy Bartholomew boar-pig*] a goodly sort of pig, such as was roasted whole at Bartholomew's fair, the great annual fair of London.

"Tidy" is found in the various senses of "timely" (*i. e.*, ripe), "fat," and "neat" (*i. e.*, dapper).

222 *foining*] thrusting.

228 *pantler*] pantry-man.

as thick as Tewksbury mustard; there's no more conceit in him than is in a mallet.

DOL. Why does the prince love him so, then?

FAL. Because their legs are both of a bigness; and a' plays at quoits well; and eats conger and fennel; and drinks off candles' ends for flap-dragons; and rides the wild-mare with the boys; and jumps upon joined-stools; and swears with a good grace; and wears his boots very smooth, like unto the sign of the leg; and breeds no bate with telling of discreet stories; and such other gambol faculties a' has, that show a weak mind and an able body, for the which the prince admits him: for the prince himself is such another; the weight of a hair will turn the scales between their avoirdupois. 244

PRINCE. Would not this nave of a wheel have his ears cut off?

231 *Tewksbury mustard*] Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire was long famed for the manufacture of mustard.

235 *conger and fennel*] conger eel and fennel sauce. The dish was regarded as an aphrodisiac.

236 *drinks off . . . flap-dragons*] a reference to the game of snap-dragon. Raisins were usually thrown into burning spirit to be rescued from the flames and eaten by the players. "Candles' ends" ludicrously misrepresents the ordinary procedure.

*rides the wild-mare*] plays see-saw.

239-240 *breeds no bate . . . stories*] breeds no quarrelling or dissatisfaction by telling modest stories; in other words, his indecencies satisfy all demands.

240-241 *gambol faculties*] skittish capacities.

245 *this nave of a wheel*] this round wheel, in allusion to Falstaff's rotundity. Shakespeare uses "the round nave" for "the round wheel" in *Hamlet*, II, ii, 490.

POINS. Let's beat him before his whore.

PRINCE. Look, whether the withered elder hath not his poll clawed like a parrot. 249

POINS. Is it not strange that desire should so many years outlive performance?

FAL. Kiss me, Doll.

PRINCE. Saturn and Venus this year in conjunction! what says the almanac to that?

POINS. And, look, whether the fiery Trigon, his man, be not lipping to his master's old tables, his note-book, his counsel-keeper.

FAL. Thou dost give me flattering busses.

DOL. By my troth, I kiss thee with a most constant heart. 260

FAL. I am old, I am old.

DOL. I love thee better than I love e'er a scurvy young boy of them all.

FAL. What stuff wilt have a kirtle of? I shall receive

248 *the withered elder*] a punning allusion to the elder tree; cf. 319, *infra*, "thou dead elm," and *Cymb.*, IV, ii, 60, "the stinking elder."

249 *his poll . . . parrot*] his head scratched as the parrots are wont to have their heads scratched.

253 *Saturn and Venus*] These planets are most rarely in conjunction, according to astronomical observation.

255-257 *the fiery Trigon . . . counsel-keeper*] Poins means that Bardolph is courting the Hostess, Falstaff's old mistress. "Fiery Trigon" is an astrological term; the three "fiery" signs of the zodiac, Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius, were supposed to form in certain planetary conditions of the heavens "trigonum igneum," i. e., the fiery triangle. "Tables" means tablets, memorandum-books, account-books.

264 *kirtle*] petticoat.

money o' Thursday: shalt have a cap to-morrow. A merry song, come: it grows late; we'll to bed. Thou'lt forget me when I am gone.

DOL. By my troth, thou'lt set me a-weeping, an thou sayest so: prove that ever I dress myse'f handsome till thy return: well, hearken at the end. 270

FAL. Some sack, Francis.

PRINCE. }  
POINS. } Anon, anon, sir. [Coming forward.

FAL. Ha! a bastard son of the king's? And art not thou Poins his brother?

PRINCE. Why, thou globe of sinful continents, what a life dost thou lead!

FAL. A better than thou: I am a gentleman; thou art a drawer.

PRINCE. Very true, sir; and I come to draw you out by the ears. 280

HOST. O, the Lord preserve thy good grace! by my troth, welcome to London. Now, the Lord bless that sweet face of thine! O Jesu, are you come from Wales?

FAL. Thou whoreson mad compound of majesty, by this light flesh and corrupt blood, thou art welcome.

DOL. How, you fat fool! I scorn you.

POINS. My lord, he will drive you out of your revenge and turn all to a merriment, if you take not the heat.

PRINCE. You whoreson candle-mine, you, how vilely

274 *Poins his*] Poins's; a common form of the genitive.

288 *take . . . the heat*] strike while the iron's hot.

289 *candle-mine*] mine or pit of tallow.

did you speak of me even now before this honest, virtuous, civil gentlewoman ! 291

HOST. God's blessing of your good heart ! and so she is, by my troth.

FAL. Didst thou hear me ?

PRINCE. Yea, and you knew me, as you did when you ran away by Gadshill : you knew I was at your back, and spoke it on purpose to try my patience.

FAL. No, no, no ; not so ; I did not think thou wast within hearing.

PRINCE. I shall drive you then to confess the wilful abuse ; and then I know how to handle you. 301

FAL. No abuse, Hal, o' mine honour ; no abuse.

PRINCE. Not to dispraise me, and call me pantler and bread-chipper and I know not what ?

FAL. No abuse, Hal.

POINS. No abuse ?

FAL. No abuse, Ned, i' the world ; honest Ned, none. I dispraised him before the wicked, that the wicked might not fall in love with him ; in which doing, I have done the part of a careful friend and a true subject, and thy father is to give me thanks for it. No abuse, Hal : none, Ned, none : no, faith, boys, none. 312

PRINCE. See now, whether pure fear and entire cowardice doth not make thee wrong this virtuous gentlewoman to close with us. Is she of the wicked ? is thine hostess here of the wicked ? or is thy boy of the wicked ?

303 *Not to dispraise me*] (Is it) not (abuse) to dispraise me ?

315 *to close with us*] in order to humour us, to rebut our charges.

or honest Bardolph, whose zeal burns in his nose, of the wicked?

POINS. Answer, thou dead elm, answer. 319

FAL. The fiend hath pricked down Bardolph irrecoverable; and his face is Lucifer's privy-kitchen, where he doth nothing but roast malt-worms. For the boy, there is a good angel about him; but the devil outbids him too.

PRINCE. For the women?

FAL. For one of them, she is in hell already, and burns poor souls. For the other, I owe her money; and whether she be damned for that, I know not.

HOST. No, I warrant you. 329

FAL. No, I think thou art not; I think thou art quit for that. Marry, there is another indictment upon thee, for suffering flesh to be eaten in thy house, contrary to the law; for the which I think thou wilt howl.

HOST. All victuallers do so: what's a joint of mutton or two in a whole Lent?

PRINCE. You, gentlewoman, —

DOL. What says your grace?

FAL. His grace says that which his flesh rebels against.

[*Knocking within.*]

319 *dead elm*] Cf. line 248, *supra*: "withered elder." The allusion is to the poor support Falstaff gives Doll Tearsheet, who is implicitly likened to a vine. Cf. *Com. of Errors*, II, ii, 173: "Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine."

327 *burns poor souls*] gives the burning fever of (venereal) disease to poor souls.

332 *suffering flesh . . . house*] The law forbade victuallers to sell flesh during Lent.

338 *His grace*] A pun on the word in its theological meaning of spiritual grace; *i. e.*, the spiritual state essential to the soul's salvation.



HOST. Who knocks so loud at door? Look to the door there, Francis. 340

*Enter PETO*

PRINCE. Peto, how now! what news?

PETO. The king your father is at Westminster;  
And there are twenty weak and wearied posts  
Come from the north: and, as I came along,  
I met and overtook a dozen captains,  
Bare-headed, sweating, knocking at the taverns,  
And asking every one for Sir John Falstaff.

PRINCE. By heaven, Poins, I feel me much to blame,  
So idly to profane the precious time;  
When tempest of commotion, like the south 350  
Borne with black vapour, doth begin to melt,  
And drop upon our bare unarmed heads.  
Give me my sword and cloak. Falstaff, good night.

*[Exeunt Prince Henry, Poins, Peto, and Bardolph.]*

FAL. Now comes in the sweetest morsel of the night,  
and we must hence, and leave it unpicked. *[Knocking within.]* More knocking at the door!

*Re-enter BARDOLPH*

How now! what's the matter?

BARD. You must away to court, sir, presently;  
A dozen captains stay at door for you. 359

350 *the south*] the south wind, which, according to Shakespeare, invariably denoted rain and tempest.

351 *Borne with*] Burdened with.

354 *sweetest . . . night*] Cf. V, iii, 49-50, *infra*: "the sweet of the night."

FAL. [*To the Page*] Pay the musicians, sirrah. Farewell, hostess ; farewell, Doll. You see, my good wenches, how men of merit are sought after : the undeserver may sleep, when the man of action is called on. Farewell, good wenches : if I be not sent away post, I will see you again ere I go.

DOL. I cannot speak ; if my heart be not ready to burst, — well, sweet Jack, have a care of thyself.

FAL. Farewell, farewell. [*Exeunt Falstaff and Bardolph.*]

HOST. Well, fare thee well : I have known thee these twenty-nine years, come peascod-time ; but an honest and truer-hearted man, — well, fare thee well. 371

BARD. [*Within*] Mistress Tearsheet !

HOST. What's the matter ?

BARD. [*Within*] Bid Mistress Tearsheet come to my master.

HOST. O, run, Doll, run ; run, good Doll : come. [*She comes blubbered.*] Yea, will you come, Doll ? [*Exeunt.*]

376 (stage direction) *She comes blubbered*] In the quarto these words form part of the text. The Folios omit them. Dyce first treated them as a stage direction.

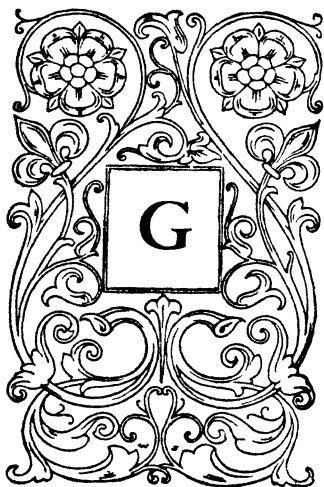


# ACT THIRD — SCENE I — WESTMINSTER

## THE PALACE

*Enter the KING in his nightgown, with a Page*

KING



O CALL THE EARLS OF  
Surrey and of Warwick;  
But, ere they come, bid them  
o'er-read these letters,  
And well consider of them: make  
goodspeed. *[Exit Page.]*  
How many thousand of my poor-  
est subjects  
Are at this hour asleep! O  
sleep, O gentle sleep,  
Nature's soft nurse, how have I  
frighted thee,  
That thou no more wilt weigh  
my eyelids down,

And steep my senses in forgetfulness?  
Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,

ACT III, SCENE I. The whole of this scene is omitted from most copies  
of the Quarto; but it is found in a few, on two inserted leaves.

(stage direction) *nightgown*] dressing-gown.

Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee, 10  
 And hush'd with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,  
 Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,  
 Under the canopies of costly state,  
 And lull'd with sound of sweetest melody?  
 O thou dull god, why liest thou with the vile  
 In loathsome beds, and leavest the kingly couch  
 A watch-case or a common 'larum-bell?  
 Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast  
 Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains  
 In cradle of the rude imperious surge, 20  
 And in the visitation of the winds,  
 Who take the ruffian billows by the top,  
 Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them  
 With deafening clamour in the slippery clouds,  
 That, with the hurly, death itself awakes?  
 Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose  
 To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude;  
 And in the calmest and most stillest night,  
 With all appliances and means to boot,  
 Deny it to a king? Then happy low, lie down! 30  
 Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

9 *cribs*] hovels.

16-17 *and leavest . . . 'larum bell?*] The kingly couch becomes in the absence of sleep the post of a watchful sentry, or a bell ready to give the alarm in case of danger. "Watch-case" is a watchman's box, a sentry box.

24 *slippery clouds*] The clouds give the waves no griphold.

25 *hurly*] uproar.

30 *happy low, lie down*] This is the original reading, which many editors change needlessly. The meaning is "ye who are happy in your humble lots, sleep in peace."

# THE SECOND PART OF      ACT III

*Enter WARWICK and SURREY*

WAR. Many good morrows to your majesty !

KING. Is it good morrow, lords ?

WAR. 'T is one o'clock, and past.

KING. Why, then, good morrow to you all, my lords.  
Have you read o'er the letters that I sent you ?

WAR. We have, my liege.

KING. Then you perceive the body of our kingdom  
How foul it is ; what rank diseases grow,  
And with what danger, near the heart of it. 40

WAR. It is but as a body yet distemper'd ;  
Which to his former strength may be restored  
With good advice and little medicine :  
My Lord Northumberland will soon be cool'd.

KING. O God ! that one might read the book of fate,  
And see the revolution of the times  
Make mountains level, and the continent,  
Weary of solid firmness, melt itself  
Into the sea ! and, other times, to see  
The beachy girdle of the ocean 50  
Too wide for Neptune's hips ; how chances mock,  
And changes fill the cup of alteration

33 *Is it good morrow?*] Is it morning?

41 *distemper'd*] out of condition.

47-49 *Make mountains level . . . Into the sea!*] Shakespeare develops the same idea in *Sonnet* lxiv, 5-10: "When I have seen the hungry ocean gain Advantage on the kingdom of the shore, . . . When I have seen such interchange of state, Or state itself confounded to decay."

With divers liquors ! O, if this were seen,  
 The happiest youth, viewing his progress through,  
 What perils past, what crosses to ensue,  
 Would shut the book, and sit him down and die.  
 'T is not ten years gone  
 Since Richard and Northumberland, great friends,  
 Did feast together, and in two years after  
 Were they at wars : it is but eight years since  
 This Percy was the man nearest my soul ;  
 Who like a brother toil'd in my affairs,  
 And laid his love and life under my foot ;  
 Yea, for my sake, even to the eyes of Richard  
 Gave him defiance. But which of you was by —  
 You, cousin Nevil, as I may remember — [*To Warwick.*  
 When Richard, with his eye brimful of tears,

60

53-56 *O, if . . . and die*] These lines appear only in the Quarto.

55 *What perils past . . . ensue*] Surveying the perils, however great, through which he has passed, and foreseeing the amount of crosses that are likely to follow.

60 *eight years since*] The period referred to must be sometime in 1399. Hence this scene would take place in 1407. But the report of Glendower's death announced at line 103 is dated by Holinshed in 1409. Little attention is paid historical chronology throughout the play.

66 *cousin Nevil*] There is confusion here. The king is addressing Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. No member of the Neville family at the time bore that title. The contemporary head of the Neville family was Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, who figures in this play along with Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. It was the Earl of Westmoreland's grandson, Richard Neville, the "king-maker," who was the first Earl of Warwick of the Neville family.

67-71 *When Richard . . . throne*] This scene is described in *Rich. II.*, V, i, 51-102.

Then check'd and rated by Northumberland,  
 Did speak these words, now proved a prophecy?  
 "Northumberland, thou ladder by the which      70  
 My cousin Bolingbroke ascends my throne;"  
 Though then, God knows, I had no such intent,  
 But that necessity so bow'd the state,  
 That I and greatness were compell'd to kiss:  
 "The time shall come," thus did he follow it,  
 "The time will come, that foul sin, gathering head,  
 Shall break into corruption:" so went on,  
 Foretelling this same time's condition,  
 And the division of our amity.

WAR. There is a history in all men's lives,      80  
 Figuring the nature of the times deceased;  
 The which observed, a man may prophesy,  
 With a near aim, of the main chance of things  
 As yet not come to life, which in their seeds  
 And weak beginnings lie intresured.  
 Such things become the hatch and brood of time;  
 And by the necessary form of this  
 King Richard might create a perfect guess  
 That great Northumberland, then false to him,

72 *I had no such intent*] I should have had no such intent. As a matter of fact, Bolingbroke had already ascended the throne before this interview of Northumberland with King Richard.

75-76 *The time shall come . . . will come*] The slight variation of the phrase on its repetition is a very natural touch.

85 *intresured*] stored up.

86 *hatch and brood*] offspring and progeny.

87 *necessary form of this*] inevitable course of this ("history in all men's lives" — line 80).

Would of that seed grow to a greater falseness;  
Which should not find a ground to root upon,  
Unless on you. 90

KING. Are these things then necessities?  
Then let us meet them like necessities:  
And that same word even now cries out on us:  
They say the bishop and Northumberland  
Are fifty thousand strong.

WAR. It cannot be, my lord;  
Rumour doth double, like the voice and echo,  
The numbers of the fear'd. Please it your grace  
To go to bed. Upon my soul, my lord,  
The powers that you already have sent forth 100  
Shall bring this prize in very easily.  
To comfort you the more, I have received  
A certain instance that Glendower is dead.  
Your majesty hath been this fortnight ill;  
And these unseason'd hours perforce must add  
Unto your sickness.

KING. I will take your counsel:  
And were these inward wars once out of hand,  
We would, dear lords, unto the Holy Land. [*Exeunt.*]

103 *instance*] proof.

*Glendower is dead*] See line 60, *supra*, and note.

105 *unseason'd*] unseasonable. Cf. line 34, *supra*.



THE SECOND PART OF      ACT III

SCENE II — GLOUCESTERSHIRE

BEFORE JUSTICE SHALLOW'S HOUSE

*Enter SHALLOW and SILENCE, meeting; MOULDY, SHADOW, WART, FEEBLE, BULLCALF, a Servant or two with them*

SHAL. Come on, come on, come on, sir; give me your hand, sir, give me your hand, sir: an early stirrer, by the rood! And how doth my good cousin Silence?

SIL. Good morrow, good cousin Shallow.

SHAL. And how doth my cousin, your bedfellow? and your fairest daughter and mine, my god-daughter Ellen?

SIL. Alas, a black ousel, cousin Shallow!

SHAL. By yea and nay, sir, I dare say my cousin William is become a good scholar: he is at Oxford still, is he not?

10

SIL. Indeed, sir, to my cost.

SHAL. A' must, then, to the inns o' court shortly: I was once of Clement's Inn, where I think they will talk of mad Shallow yet.

SIL. You were called "lusty Shallow" then, cousin.

SHAL. By the mass, I was called any thing; and I would have done any thing indeed too, and roundly too. There was I, and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and

3 *by the rood*] by the holy cross.

7 *ousel*] blackbird. The speaker civilly deprecates praise of his daughter.

Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, III, i, 115: "The *ousel* cock, so *black* of hue."

8 *By yea and nay*] Without question.

17 *roundly*] bluntly, unceremoniously

black George Barnes, and Francis Pickbone, and Will Squele, a Cotswold man; you had not four such swinge- 20 bucklers in all the inns o' court again: and I may say to you, we knew where the bona robas were, and had the best of them all at commandment. Then was Jack Falstaff, now Sir John, a boy, and page to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

SIL. This Sir John, cousin, that comes hither anon about soldiers?

SHAL. The same Sir John, the very same. I see him break Skogan's head at the court-gate, when a' was a crack not thus high: and the very same day did I fight 30 with one Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer, behind Gray's Inn. Jesu, Jesu, the mad days that I have spent! and to see how many of my old acquaintance are dead!

SIL. We shall all follow, cousin.

SHAL. Certain, 't is certain; very sure, very sure:

20 *Cotswold*] Shakespeare's familiarity with the district of the Cotswold hills, where wrestling, coursing, and other sports and athletic exercises were especially practised, is further illustrated in *M. Wives*, I, i, 80: "I heard say he [*i. e.*, your fallow greyhound] was outrun on *Cotsall* [*i. e.*, Cotswold]."

*swingebucklers*] swashbucklers, roisterers.

22 *bona-robas*] courtesans. Cf. line 200, *infra*.

24-25 *Falstaff . . . Norfolk*] This was true of Sir John Oldcastle, whose name the character of Falstaff bore in Shakespeare's first draft. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, i, 40, and I, ii, 114, *supra*, and *Epilogue*, 29-30, *infra*.

29 *Skogan*] probably an anachronistic reference to John Skogan, Edward IV's fool, of whose exploits many traditions survived to Shakespeare's day. There was a Henry Skogan, tutor to Henry IV's sons, who was unlikely to have fought with Falstaff.

30 *a crack*] a pert boy.

death, as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all; all shall die. How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair?

SIL. By my troth, I was not there.

SHAL. Death is certain. Is old Double of your town living yet? 40

SIL. Dead, sir.

SHAL. Jesu, Jesu, dead! a' drew a good bow; and dead! a' shot a fine shoot: John a Gaunt loved him well, and betted much money on his head. Dead! a' would have clapped i' the clout at twelve score; and carried you a forehand shaft a fourteen and fourteen and a half, that it would have done a man's heart good to see. How a score of ewes now?

SIL. Thereafter as they be: a score of good ewes may be worth ten pounds. 50

SHAL. And is old Double dead?

SIL. Here come two of Sir John Falstaff's men, as I think.

*Enter BARDOLPH, and one with him*

BARD. Good morrow, honest gentlemen: I beseech you, which is Justice Shallow?

SHAL. I am Robert Shallow, sir; a poor esquire of

37 *How*] How much, what is the price of? Cf. line 48, *infra*.

45 *clapped i' the clout*] landed in the bull's-eye of the target at a distance of twelve-score yards.

46 *forehand shaft*] The heavier class of arrow, especially used for long-distance aim.

46-47 *a fourteen and fourteen and a half*] fourteen or even fourteen and a half score of yards.

48 *How*] See 37, *supra*.

49 *Thereafter as they be*] That depends on their condition.

this county, and one of the king's justices of the peace: what is your good pleasure with me?

BARD. My captain, sir, commends him to you; my captain, Sir John Falstaff, a tall gentleman, by heaven, 60 and a most gallant leader.

SHAL. He greets me well, sir. I knew him a good back-sword man. How doth the good knight? may I ask how my lady his wife doth?

BARD. Sir, pardon; a soldier is better accommodated than with a wife.

SHAL. It is well said, in faith, sir; and it is well said indeed too. Better accommodated! it is good; yea, indeed, is it: good phrases are surely, and ever were, very commendable. Accommodated! it comes of "ac- 70 commodo:" very good; a good phrase.

BARD. Pardon me, sir; I have heard the word. Phrase call you it? by this good day, I know not the phrase; but I will maintain the word with my sword to be a soldier-like word, and a word of exceeding good command, by heaven. Accommodated; that is, when a man is, as they say, accommodated; or when a man is, being, whereby a' may be thought to be accommodated; which is an excellent thing.

SHAL. It is very just.

80

60 *tall*] fine, valiant.

63 *back-sword*] single-stick.

65 *accommodated*] furnished, equipped. The word was regarded as somewhat affected. Ben Jonson numbers it in his *Timber* (ed. Schelling, p. 71) among "the perfumed terms of the time."

73 *I know not the phrase*] I know not the term "phrase."

75-76 *of exceeding good command*] of first-rate authority.

# THE SECOND PART OF      ACT III

*Enter FALSTAFF*

Look, here comes good Sir John. Give me your good hand, give me your worship's good hand: by my troth, you like well and bear your years very well: welcome, good Sir John.

FAL. I am glad to see you well, good Master Robert Shallow: Master Surecard, as I think?

SHAL. No, Sir John; it is my cousin Silence, in commission with me.

FAL. Good Master Silence, it well befits you should be of the peace. 90

SIL. Your good worship is welcome.

FAL. Fie! this is hot weather, gentlemen. Have you provided me here half a dozen sufficient men?

SHAL. Marry, have we, sir. Will you sit?

FAL. Let me see them, I beseech you.

SHAL. Where 's the roll? where 's the roll? where 's the roll? Let me see, let me see, let me see. So, so, so, so, so, so, so: yea, marry, sir: Ralph Mouldy! Let them appear as I call; let them do so, let them do so. Let me see; where is Mouldy? 100

MOUL. Here, an 't please you.

SHAL. What think you, Sir John? a good-limbed fellow; young, strong, and of good friends.

83 *you like well*] you are in good condition. Thus the Quarto. The Folios read *you look well*. "Liking" is frequently found in the sense of "good health."

86 *Master Surecard*] a colloquial term for a boon companion.

103 *of good friends*] of a sound stock.

FAL. Is thy name Mouldy?

MOUL. Yea, an 't please you.

FAL. 'T is the more time thou wert used.

SHAL. Ha, ha, ha! most excellent, i' faith! things that are mouldy lack use: very singular good! in faith, well said, Sir John; very well said.

FAL. Prick him.

110

MOUL. I was pricked well enough before, an you could have let me alone: my old dame will be undone now, for one to do her husbandry and her drudgery: you need not to have pricked me; there are other men fitter to go out than I.

FAL. Go to: peace, Mouldy; you shall go. Mouldy, it is time you were spent.

MOUL. Spent!

SHAL. Peace, fellow, peace; stand aside: know you where you are? For the other, Sir John: let me see: Simon Shadow!

121

FAL. Yea, marry, let me have him to sit under: he's like to be a cold soldier.

SHAL. Where 's Shadow?

SHAD. Here, sir.

FAL. Shadow, whose son art thou?

SHAD. My mother's son, sir.

FAL. Thy mother's son! like enough, and thy father's shadow: so the son of the female is the shadow of the

110 *Prick him*] Mark him, by pricking a hole in the paper against the name.

111 *I was pricked well enough before*] for this unedifying quibbling cf. *Sonnet xx*, 13: "But since she *prick'd* thee out for women's pleasure."

male: it is often so, indeed; but much of the father's substance!

131

SHAL. Do you like him, Sir John?

FAL. Shadow will serve for summer; prick him, for we have a number of shadows to fill up the muster-book.

SHAL. Thomas Wart!

FAL. Where 's he?

WART. Here, sir.

FAL. Is thy name Wart?

WART. Yea, sir.

FAL. Thou art a very ragged wart.

140

SHAL. Shall I prick him down, Sir John?

FAL. It were superfluous; for his apparel is built upon his back, and the whole frame stands upon pins: prick him no more.

SHAL. Ha, ha, ha! you can do it, sir; you can do it: I commend you well. Francis Feeble!

FEE. Here, sir.

SHAL. What trade art thou, Feeble?

FEE. A woman's tailor, sir.

SHAL. Shall I prick him, sir?

150

FAL. You may: but if he had been a man's tailor, he 'ld ha' pricked you. Wilt thou make as many holes in an enemy's battle as thou hast done in a woman's petticoat?

FEE. I will do my good will, sir: you can have no more.

134 *a number of shadows*] mere names, fictitious entries.

153 *battle*] battalion, army.

FAL. Well said, good woman's tailor! well said, courageous Feeble! thou wilt be as valiant as the wrathful dove or most magnanimous mouse. Prick the woman's tailor: well, Master Shallow; deep, Master Shallow.

FEE. I would Wart might have gone, sir. 160

FAL. I would thou wert a man's tailor, that thou mightst mend him and make him fit to go. I cannot put him to a private soldier, that is the leader of so many thousands: let that suffice, most forcible Feeble.

FEE. It shall suffice, sir.

FAL. I am bound to thee, reverend Feeble. Who is next?

SHAL. Peter Bullcalf o' the green!

FAL. Yea, marry, let's see Bullcalf.

BULL. Here, sir. 170

FAL. 'Fore God, a likely fellow! Come, prick me Bullcalf till he roar again.

BULL. O Lord! good my lord captain, —

FAL. What, dost thou roar before thou art pricked?

BULL. O Lord, sir! I am a diseased man.

FAL. What disease hast thou?

BULL. A wholesome cold, sir, a cough, sir, which I caught with ringing in the king's affairs upon his coronation-day, sir. 179

FAL. Come, thou shalt go to the wars in a gown; we

158 *magnanimous*] great-souled, heroic.

163 *put him to*] make of him, turn him into.

164 *many thousands*] a reference to the verminous denizens of Wart's rags.



THE SECOND PART OF      ACT III

---

will have away thy cold; and I will take such order that thy friends shall ring for thee. Is here all?

SHAL. Here is two more called than your number; you must have but four here, sir: and so, I pray you, go in with me to dinner.

FAL. Come, I will go drink with you, but I cannot tarry dinner. I am glad to see you, by my troth, Master Shallow.

SHAL. O, Sir John, do you remember since we lay all night in the windmill in Saint George's field? 190

FAL. No more of that, good Master Shallow, no more of that.

SHAL. Ha! 't was a merry night. And is Jane Night-work alive?

FAL. She lives, Master Shallow.

SHAL. She never could away with me.

FAL. Never, never; she would always say she could not abide Master Shallow.

SHAL. By the mass, I could anger her to the heart. She was then a bona-roba. Doth she hold her own well?

FAL. Old, old, Master Shallow. 201

SHAL. Nay, she must be old; she cannot choose but

181 *order*] measures.

182 *ring for thee*] toll thy funeral bell.

183-184] *Here is two . . . four here*] An apparent oversight on Shakespeare's part. Five recruits have been named, and if Falstaff only required four, Shallow was in error in saying that he had summoned *two more* than were needed.

190 *Saint George's field*] This place — in Southwark — was best known as the muster ground of the London soldiery. Cf. *2 Hen. VI*, V, i, 46.

196 *away with*] endure.

be old; certain she's old; and had Robin Nightwork by old Nightwork before I came to Clement's Inn.

SIL. That's fifty five year ago.

SHAL. Ha, cousin Silence, that thou hadst seen that that this knight and I have seen! Ha, Sir John, said I well?

FAL. We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow.

210

SHAL. That we have, that we have, that we have; in faith, Sir John, we have: our watch-word was "Hem boys!" Come, let's to dinner; come, let's to dinner: Jesus, the days that we have seen! Come, come.

[*Exeunt Falstaff and the Justices.*]

BULL. Good master corporate Bardolph, stand my friend; and here's four Harry ten shillings in French crowns for you. In very truth, sir, I had as lief be hanged, sir, as go: and yet, for mine own part, sir, I do not care; but rather, because I am unwilling, and, for mine own part, have a desire to stay with my friends; else, sir, I did not care, for mine own part, so much.

221

BARD. Go to; stand aside.

MOUL. And, good master corporal captain, for my old dame's sake, stand my friend: she has nobody to do any thing about her when I am gone; and she is old, and cannot help herself: you shall have forty, sir.

212 "*Hem boys!*" Mum's the word.

215 *corporate*] a blunder for "corporal."

216 *Harry ten shillings*] An anachronism. Ten shilling pieces were first coined by Henry VII, and were continued by Henry VIII. Hence their epithet of "Harry." No such coins were in existence in Henry IV's time.

226 *forty*] *sc.* shillings.

BARD. Go to; stand aside.

FEE. By my troth, I care not; a man can die but once: we owe God a death: I'll ne'er bear a base mind: an't be my destiny, so; an't be not, so: no man's too good to serve's prince; and let it go which way it will, he that dies this year is quit for the next. 232

BARD. Well said; thou'rt a good fellow.

FEE. Faith, I'll bear no base mind.

*Re-enter FALSTAFF and the Justices*

FAL. Come, sir, which men shall I have?

SHAL. Four of which you please.

BARD. Sir, a word with you: I have three pound to free Mouldy and Bullcalf.

FAL. Go to; well.

SHAL. Come, Sir John, which four will you have? 240

FAL. Do you choose for me.

SHAL. Marry, then, Mouldy, Bullcalf, Feeble and Shadow.

FAL. Mouldy and Bullcalf: for you, Mouldy, stay at home till you are past service: and for your part, Bullcalf, grow till you come unto it: I will none of you.

SHAL. Sir John, Sir John, do not yourself wrong: they are your likeliest men, and I would have you served with the best. 249

FAL. Will you tell me, Master Shallow, how to choose a man? Care I for the limb, the thewes, the stature,

237 *three pound*] Bardolph had actually received four pounds; he was concealing the full amount from Falstaff.

bulk, and big assemblance of a man! Give me the spirit, Master Shallow. Here's Wart; you see what a ragged appearance it is: a' shall charge you and discharge you with the motion of a pewterer's hammer, come off and on swifter than he that gibbets on the brewer's bucket. And this same half-faced fellow, Shadow; give me this man: he presents no mark to the enemy; the foeman may with as great aim level at the edge of a penknife. And for a retreat; how swiftly will this Feeble the woman's tailor run off! O, give me the spare men, and spare me the great ones. Put me a caliver into Wart's hand, Bardolph.

263

BARD. Hold, Wart, traverse; thus, thus, thus.

FAL. Come, manage me your caliver. So: very well: go to: very good, exceeding good. O, give me always a little, lean, old, chapt, bald shot. Well said, i' faith,

252 *big assemblance*] "large make."

254 *charge you and discharge you*] advance and retire. "You" is the ethic dative.

256 *he that gibbets on . . . bucket*] he that hangs (barrels) on the yoke of the brewers' men. "Gibbets" means "hangs"; "bucket" is found in the sense of "beam" or "yoke," on which a barrel may be hung and carried. The reference is to the practice of hauling about barrels of beer by attaching them to chains depending from a beam borne on the shoulders of the brewers' men. The attribution of swiftness to this method of haulage is ironical.

257 *half-faced*] wizened, a face in profile, like that stamped on a coin.

262 *caliver*] light musket.

264 *traverse*] march; a military term.

267 *chapt*] The original reading is *chopt*, which Rowe altered to *chapt* needlessly. "Chopt" is often found in the sense of wrinkled. Cf. *Sonnet* lxii, 10: "Beated and *chopp'd* with tann'd antiquity." *shot*] shooter, marksman.

Wart; thou 'rt a good scab: hold, there's a tester for thee. 269

SHAL. He is not his craft's-master; he doth not do it right. I remember at Mile-end Green, when I lay at Clement's Inn, — I was then Sir Dagonet in Arthur's show, — there was a little quiver fellow, and a' would manage you his piece thus; and a' would about and about, and come you in and come you in: "rah, tah, tah," would a' say; "bounce" would a' say; and away again would a' go, and again would a' come: I shall ne'er see such a fellow. 278

FAL. These fellows will do well, Master Shallow. God keep you, Master Silence: I will not use many words with you. Fare you well, gentlemen both: I thank you: I must a dozen mile to-night. Bardolph, give the soldiers coats.

SHAL. Sir John, the Lord bless you! God prosper your affairs! God send us peace! At your return visit our house; let our old acquaintance be renewed: peradventure I will with ye to the court.

268 *scab*] a disagreeable pun on Wart's name.  
*tester*] sixpence.

271 *Mile-end Green*] a parade ground for the citizen soldiery of London.  
*lay*] resided.

272 *Sir Dagonet in Arthur's show*] a reference to an Elizabethan archery society, which bore the fantastic title of "The Fellowship of Prince Arthur's Knights." Each member assumed the name of a personage of Arthurian romance. Sir Dagonet figures in some of the Arthurian stories as a fool at King Arthur's court.

273 *quiver*] quick, nimble.

276 *bounce*] bang.

FAL. 'Fore God, I would you would, Master Shallow.

SHAL. Go to; I have spoke at a word. God keep you. 290

FAL. Fare you well, gentle gentlemen. [*Exeunt Justices.*] On, Bardolph; lead the men away. [*Exeunt Bardolph, Recruits, &c.*] As I return, I will fetch off these justices: I do see the bottom of Justice Shallow. Lord, Lord, how subject we old men are to this vice of lying! This same starved justice hath done nothing but prate to me of the wildness of his youth, and the feats he hath done about Turnbull Street; and every third word a lie, duer paid to the hearer than the Turk's tribute. I do remember him at Clement's Inn like a man made after supper of a cheese-paring: when a' was naked, he was, for all the world, like a forked radish, with a head fantastically carved upon it with a knife: a' was so forlorn, that his dimensions to any thick sight were invisible: a' was the very genius of famine; yet lecherous as a monkey, and the whores called him mandrake:

289 *at a word*] for talking's sake. Shallow has no intention of going to court. The expression usually means "in a word," or "to come to the point."

293 *fetch off*] get level with, get a rise out of.

298 *Turnbull Street*] Turnmill Street, near Clerkenwell, the haunt of bad characters.

302 *like a forked radish*] Cf. Falstaff's phrase, "I am a bunch of radish," in *1 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 179.

305 *invisible*] Rowe's emendation of the original reading *invincible*.

306 *mandrake*] a plant, of which the root was deemed to resemble the lower part of the human anatomy.

a' came ever in the rearward of the fashion, and sung those tunes to the overscutched huswives that he heard the carmen whistle, and sware they were his fancies or his good-nights. And now is this Vice's dagger become a squire, and talks as familiarly of John a Gaunt as if he had been sworn brother to him; and I'll be sworn a' ne'er saw him but once in the Tilt-yard; and then he burst his head for crowding among the marshal's men. I saw it, and told John a Gaunt he beat his own name; for you might have thrust him and all his apparel into an eel-skin; the case of a treble hautboy was a mansion for him, a court: and now has he land and beefs. Well, I'll be acquainted with him, if I return; and it shall go hard but I will make him a philosopher's two stones

307 *in the rearward of*] behind.

308 *overscutched huswives*] wornout strumpets.

309-310 *fancies or good-nights*] Such titles were often bestowed on short lyrics.

310 *this Vice's dagger*] The character called the Vice in the old moralities invariably carried about with him a thin "dagger of lath." See *Tw. Night*, IV, ii, 120-124, and *1 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 130. The Vice was a farcical servant of the devil.

313 *Tilt-yard*] The ground at Westminster where royal tournaments were held.

314 *burst*] broke.

315 *beat his own name*] belaboured a *gaunt* creature; Shakespeare's favourite pun on the name "gaunt." Cf. *Rich. II*, II, i, 74: "Old Gaunt indeed, and *gaunt* in being old."

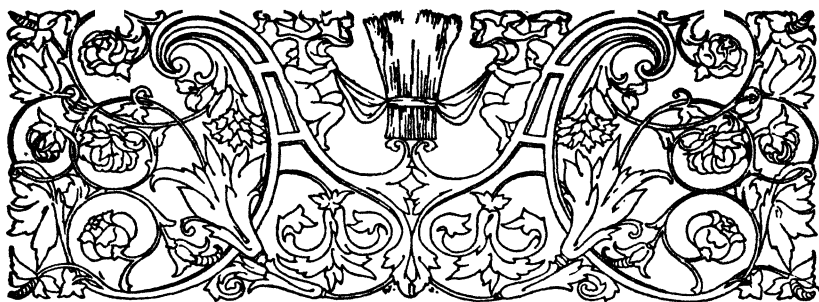
317 *a treble hautboy*] a flute-like instrument playing treble.

320 *a philosopher's two stones*] a jocosely exaggerated and coarse reference to the alchemist's stone, which was assumed to be capable of transmuting base metals into gold.

to me: if the young dace be a bait for the old pike, I see no reason in the law of nature but I may snap at him. Let time shape, and there an end. [Exit.]

321-323 *if the young dace . . . snap at him*, Fishermen employed "dace," a very small fish, as bait for catching overgrown pike. Falstaff, rather confusing the metaphor, means that he will play the part of the decoy, and get Justice Shallow into difficulties. In designating the foolish justice an old pike, Shakespeare probably alluded to the armorial bearings of Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford-on-Avon, of whom Shallow was an ironic portrait. "Luces," a familiar word for pikes, filled a large place on the heraldic shield of the Lucy family. Cf. *M. Wives*, I, i, 14-20.





ACT FOURTH — SCENE I — YORKSHIRE  
GAULTREE FOREST

*Enter the* ARCHBISHOP of YORK, MOWBRAY, HASTINGS, *and others*

ARCHBISHOP



HAT IS THIS FOREST  
call'd?

HAST. 'T is Gaultree Forest,  
an 't shall please your grace.

ARCH. Here stand, my lords;  
and send discoverers forth  
To know the numbers of our  
enemies.

HAST. We have sent forth al-  
ready.

ARCH. 'T is well done.  
My friends and brethren in these  
great affairs,  
I must acquaint you that I have  
received

New-dated letters from Northumberland;

2 *Gaultree Forest*] the great forest of Galtres, which once covered 100,000  
acres to the north of the city of York.

Their cold intent, tenour and substance, thus :  
Here doth he wish his person, with such powers 10  
As might hold sortance with his quality,  
The which he could not levy ; whereupon  
He is retired, to ripe his growing fortunes,  
To Scotland : and concludes in hearty prayers  
That your attempts may overlive the hazard  
And fearful meeting of their opposite.

MOWB. Thus do the hopes we have in him touch  
ground  
And dash themselves to pieces.

*Enter a Messenger*

HAST. Now, what news ?

MESS. West of this forest, scarcely off a mile,  
In goodly form comes on the enemy ; 20  
And, by the ground they hide, I judge their number  
Upon or near the rate of thirty thousand.

MOWB. The just proportion that we gave them out.  
Let us sway on and face them in the field.

ARCH. What well-appointed leader fronts us here ?

*Enter WESTMORLAND*

MOWB. I think it is my Lord of Westmoreland.

WEST. Health and fair greeting from our general,  
The prince, Lord John and Duke of Lancaster.

11 *hold sortance with*] sort with, suit.

13 *ripe*] ripen, mature.

16 *their opposite*] the foe.

23 *The just proportion . . . out*] The very number that we announced.

24 *Let us sway on*] Let us sweep on or advance.

ARCH. Say on, my Lord of Westmoreland, in peace:  
What doth concern your coming?

WEST. Then, my lord, 30  
Unto your grace do I in chief address  
The substance of my speech. If that rebellion  
Came like itself, in base and abject routs,  
Led on by bloody youth, guarded with rags,  
And countenanced by boys and beggary;  
I say, if damn'd commotion so appear'd,  
In his true, native and most proper shape,  
You, reverend father, and these noble lords  
Had not been here, to dress the ugly form  
Of base and bloody insurrection 40  
With your fair honours. You, lord Archbishop,  
Whose see is by a civil peace maintain'd,  
Whose beard the silver hand of peace hath touch'd,  
Whose learning and good letters peace hath tutor'd,  
Whose white investments figure innocence,  
The dove and very blessed spirit of peace,  
Wherefore do you so ill translate yourself  
Out of the speech of peace that bears such grace,  
Into the harsh and boisterous tongue of war;  
Turning your books to graves, your ink to blood, 50

33 *abject routs*] beggarly mobs.

34 *bloody*] full blooded.

*rags*] The original reading is *rage*: "guarded" means "trimmed,"  
hence "dressed."

36 *commotion*] insurrection; cf. line 93, *infra*.

42 *civil*] well-ordered.

45 *white investments*] white vestures; the ordinary episcopal dress.

50 *Turning your books to graves*] Thus the original reading, which makes

Your pens to lances, and your tongue divine  
To a loud trumpet and a point of war?

ARCH. Wherefore do I this? so the question stands.  
Briefly to this end: we are all diseased,  
And with our surfeiting and wanton hours  
Have brought ourselves into a burning fever,  
And we must bleed for it; of which disease  
Our late king, Richard, being infected, died.  
But, my most noble Lord of Westmoreland,  
I take not on me here as a physician, 60  
Nor do I as an enemy to peace  
Troop in the throngs of military men;  
But rather show a while like fearful war,  
To diet rank minds sick of happiness,  
And purge the obstructions which begin to stop  
Our very veins of life. Hear me more plainly.  
I have in equal balance justly weigh'd  
What wrongs our arms may do, what wrongs we suffer,  
And find our griefs heavier than our offences.  
We see which way the stream of time doth run, 70

harsh sense. Modern editors change the word *graves* to *greaves*, *i. e.*, leg armour, which was often of leather, like the binding of books. If *graves* be retained, the phrase may be explained as meaning that books are converted into the paraphernalia of death.

52 *point*] signal.

55-79 *And with our surfeiting . . . done us wrong*] This passage is omitted from the Quarto.

64 *To diet rank minds*] So as to put on a medicinal regimen, or prescribe for minds that are overgorged with happiness.

69 *griefs*] grievances.

And are enforced from our most quiet there  
By the rough torrent of occasion ;  
And have the summary of all our griefs,  
When time shall serve, to show in articles ;  
Which long ere this we offer'd to the king,  
And might by no suit gain our audience :  
When we are wrong'd and would unfold our griefs,  
We are denied access unto his person  
Even by those men that most have done us wrong.  
The dangers of the days but newly gone, 80  
Whose memory is written on the earth  
With yet appearing blood, and the examples  
Of every minute's instance, present now,  
Hath put us in these ill-beseeming arms,  
Not to break peace or any branch of it,  
But to establish here a peace indeed,  
Concurring both in name and quality.

WEST. When ever yet was your appeal denied ?  
Wherein have you been galled by the king ?  
What peer hath been suborn'd to grate on you, 90  
That you should seal this lawless bloody book  
Of forged rebellion with a seal divine,  
And consecrate commotion's bitter edge ?

71 *our most quiet there*] our greatest quietness in the stream of time. This  
is the original reading; *sphere* has been suggested in the place of *there*.  
82-83 *examples . . . instance*] examples which every minute presses on  
our notice.

90 *suborn'd to grate on you*] bribed to harass you.

93 *commotion's bitter edge*] the cruel sword of insurrection. Cf. line 36,  
*supra*, "*damn'd commotion*." This line is omitted from the Folios,  
like line 95, "*To . . . cruelty*."

ARCH. My brother general, the commonwealth,  
To brother born an household cruelty,  
I make my quarrel in particular.

WEST. There is no need of any such redress;  
Or if there were, it not belongs to you.

MOWB. Why not to him in part, and to us all  
That feel the bruises of the days before,  
And suffer the condition of these times  
To lay a heavy and unequal hand  
Upon our honours?

100

WEST. O, my good Lord Mowbray,  
Construe the times to their necessities,  
And you shall say indeed, it is the time,  
And not the king, that doth you injuries.  
Yet for your part, it not appears to me  
Either from the king or in the present time

94-96 *My brother . . . particular*] This passage seems corrupt. Some words have probably been accidentally dropped by the printer. Westmoreland's succeeding reply, 97-98, has no very close relevance to the archbishop's words as they stand. The archbishop seems to mean that the injured commonwealth is his brother in a general sense, while the death of his own horn brother, Lord Scrope, who had been executed by King Henry (see *1 Hen. IV*, I, iii, 270, *seq.*), was a cruel wrong to his family, and both public and private grounds (but private grounds in particular) impel him to take up arms.

97-98 *There is no need . . . belongs to you*] The archbishop is not called upon to redress the wrongs either of the commonwealth or of his own brother.

103-139 *O, my good Lord Mowbray . . . more than the king*] This passage is omitted from the Quarto.

104 *to their necessities*] according to the exigencies of affairs.

108 *Either from the king . . . time*] Whether the defects of the government are to be imputed to the king or to pressure of circumstance.

That you should have an inch of any ground  
To build a grief on: were you not restored 110  
To all the Duke of Norfolk's signories,  
Your noble and right well remember'd father's?

Mowb. What thing, in honour, had my father lost,  
That need to be revived and breathed in me?  
The king that loved him, as the state stood then,  
Was force perforce compell'd to banish him:  
And then that Henry Bolingbroke and he,  
Being mounted and both roused in their seats,  
Their neighing coursers daring of the spur,  
Their armed staves in charge, their beavers down, 120  
Their eyes of fire sparkling through sights of steel  
And the loud trumpet blowing them together,  
Then, then, when there was nothing could have stay'd  
My father from the breast of Bolingbroke,  
O, when the king did throw his warder down,  
His own life hung upon the staff he threw;  
Then threw he down himself and all their lives  
That by indictment and by dint of sword  
Have since miscarried under Bolingbroke.

WEST. You speak, Lord Mowbray, now you know  
not what. 130

110 *a grief*] a grievance; cf. line 69, *supra*.

114 *breathed in me*] invested with new breath or life in me.

116 *force perforce*] of absolute necessity. Cf. IV, iv, 46, *infra*.

120 *Their armed staves . . . down*] Their lances ready for the charge,  
the front pieces of their helmets let down.

121 *sights of steel*] the perforated eyeholes of their helmets.

125 *warder*] staff.

129 *miscarried*] been ruined, perished.

The Earl of Hereford was reputed then  
 In England the most valiant gentleman :  
 Who knows on whom fortune would then have smiled ?  
 But if your father had been victor there,  
 He ne'er had borne it out of Coventry :  
 For all the country in a general voice  
 Cried hate upon him ; and all their prayers and love  
 Were set on Hereford, whom they doted on  
 And bless'd and graced indeed, more than the king.  
 But this is mere digression from my purpose. 140  
 Here come I from our princely general  
 To know your griefs ; to tell you from his grace  
 That he will give you audience ; and wherein  
 It shall appear that your demands are just,  
 You shall enjoy them, every thing set off  
 That might so much as think you enemies.

MowB. But he hath forced us to compel this offer ;  
 And it proceeds from policy, not love.

WEST. Mowbray, you overween to take it so ;  
 This offer comes from mercy, not from fear : 150  
 For, lo ! within a ken our army lies,  
 Upon mine honour, all too confident

131 *The Earl of Hereford*] Bolingbroke was really *Duke of Hereford*.  
 Cf. *Rich. II.*, I, iii, 21.

135 *borne it out of Coventry*] ridden out of, escaped from, Coventry.

139 *indeed*] Theobald's emendation of the original reading *and did*.

145-146 *every thing set off . . . enemies*] everything ignored or set aside  
 that might so much as give cause to make you thought to be  
 enemies.

149 *you overween*] you are arrogant.

151 *within a ken*] within sight.





We come within our awful banks again,  
And knit our powers to the arm of peace.

WEST. This will I show the general. Please you, lords,  
In sight of both our battles we may meet;  
And either end in peace, which God so frame! 180  
Or to the place of difference call the swords  
Which must decide it.

ARCH. My lord, we will do so. [*Exit West.*]

MOBW. There is a thing within my bosom tells me  
That no conditions of our peace can stand.

HAST. Fear you not that: if we can make our  
peace

Upon such large terms and so absolute  
As our conditions shall consist upon,  
Our peace shall stand as firm as rocky mountains.

MOBW. Yea, but our valuation shall be such  
That every slight and false-derived cause, 190  
Yea, every idle, nice and wanton reason  
Shall to the king taste of this action;  
That, were our royal faiths martyrs in love,  
We shall be winnow'd with so rough a wind

strengthen the archbishop's position. But no quite satisfactory  
change has been suggested.

176 *awful banks*] limits of due reverence.

179 *battles*] armies. Cf. line 154, *supra*.

181 *place of difference*] point of disagreement.

187 *consist upon*] consist of, or rest upon.

189 *our valuation*] the esteem in which we are held.

191 *nice and wanton reason*] trivial and frivolous affair.

193 *were our royal . . . love*] did our fidelity to the king make us ready  
to die in our affection for his cause.

That even our corn shall seem as light as chaff  
And good from bad find no partition.

ARCH. No, no, my lord. Note this; the king is weary  
Of dainty and such picking grievances:  
For he hath found to end one doubt by death  
Revives two greater in the heirs of life, 200  
And therefore will he wipe his tables clean,  
And keep no tell-tale to his memory  
That may repeat and history his loss  
To new remembrance; for full well he knows  
He cannot so precisely weed this land  
As his misdoubts present occasion:  
His foes are so enrooted with his friends  
That, plucking to unfix an enemy,  
He doth unfasten so and shake a friend.  
So that this land, like an offensive wife 210  
That hath enraged him on to offer strokes,  
As he is striking, holds his infant up,  
And hangs resolved correction in the arm  
That was uprear'd to execution.

HAST. Besides, the king hath wasted all his rods  
On late offenders, that he now doth lack  
The very instruments of chastisement:

196 *partition*] separation, mark of distinction.

198 *dainty and such picking*] capricious and such paltry.

201 *wipe his tables clean*] clean the slate; "tables" were tablets of slate or ivory.

203 *history his loss*] record, chronicle his loss.

211 *enraged him on*] driven him (*i. e.*, the husband) on by anger.

213 *hangs resolved correction*] suspends, arrests his resolve to give correction. The purposed stroke is not delivered.

So that his power, like to a fangless lion,  
May offer, but not hold.

ARCH. 'T is very true:  
And therefore be assured, my good lord marshal, 220  
If we do now make our atonement well,  
Our peace will, like a broken limb united,  
Grow stronger for the breaking.

MOWB. Be it so.  
Here is return'd my lord of Westmoreland.

*Re-enter WESTMORELAND*

WEST. The prince is here at hand: pleaseth your  
lordship

To meet his grace just distance 'tween our armies.

MOWB. Your grace of York, in God's name, then,  
set forward.

ARCH. Before, and greet his grace: my lord, we come.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II — ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST

*Enter, from one side, MOWBRAY, attended; afterwards, the ARCH-  
BISHOP, HASTINGS, and others: from the other side, PRINCE  
JOHN of LANCASTER, and WESTMORELAND; Officers, and  
others with them*

LAN. You are well encounter'd here, my cousin  
Mowbray:

Good day to you, gentle lord archbishop;  
And so to you, Lord Hastings, and to all.  
My Lord of York, it better show'd with you  
When that your flock, assembled by the bell,

219 *May offer . . . hold*] May offer to strike, but not persist in his purpose.

Encircled you to hear with reverence  
Your exposition on the holy text,  
Than now to see you here an iron man,  
Cheering a rout of rebels with your drum,  
Turning the word to sword and life to death. 10  
That man that sits within a monarch's heart,  
And ripens in the sunshine of his favour,  
Would he abuse the countenance of the king,  
Alack, what mischiefs might he set abroad  
In shadow of such greatness! With you, lord bishop,  
It is even so. Who hath not heard it spoken  
How deep you were within the books of God?  
To us the speaker in his parliament;  
To us the imagined voice of God himself;  
The very opener and intelligencer 20  
Between the grace, the sanctities of heaven  
And our dull workings. O, who shall believe  
But you misuse the reverence of your place,  
Employ the countenance and grace of heaven,  
As a false favourite doth his prince's name,  
In deeds dishonourable? You have ta'en up,  
Under the counterfeited zeal of God,  
The subjects of his substitute, my father,  
And both against the peace of heaven and him  
Have here up-swarm'd them.

ARCH.

Good my Lord of Lancaster, 30

8 *an iron man*] a man in armour.20 *intelligencer*] go-between, conveyer of news.26 *ta'en up*] raised in arms.30 *up-swarm'd*] made them to swarm (like bees).

I am not here against your father's peace;  
But, as I told my Lord of Westmoreland,  
The time disorder'd doth, in common sense,  
Crowd us and crush us to this monstrous form,  
To hold our safety up. I sent your grace  
The parcels and particulars of our grief,  
The which hath been with scorn shoved from the court,  
Whereon this Hydra son of war is born;  
Whose dangerous eyes may well be charm'd asleep  
With grant of our most just and right desires, 40  
And true obedience, of this madness cured,  
Stoop tamely to the foot of majesty.

MOWB. If not, we ready are to try our fortunes  
To the last man.

HAST. And though we here fall down,  
We have supplies to second our attempt:  
If they miscarry, theirs shall second them;  
And so success of mischief shall be born,  
And heir from heir shall hold this quarrel up,  
Whiles England shall have generation.

33 *in common sense*] owing to the dictates of ordinary reason.

36 *parcels . . . of our grief*] specific details of our grievance.

38-39 *Hydra son of war . . . charm'd asleep*] Hydra was the many-headed monster, challenged by Hercules, which, when one of its heads was cut off, supplied its place by another. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, ix, 70, *seq.* Cf. 1 *Hen.* IV, V, iv, 25: "they grow like Hydra's heads." The reference here to the creature's dangerous eyes seems due to a confusion of Hydra with Argus, the hundred-eyed monster, who was "charmed asleep" by Mercury. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, i, 621, *seq.*

47 *success of mischief*] a continuous succession of disasters.

LAN. You are too shallow, Hastings, much too shallow, 50  
To sound the bottom of the after-times.

WEST. Pleaseth your grace to answer them directly  
How far forth you do like their articles.

LAN. I like them all, and do allow them well;  
And swear here, by the honour of my blood,  
My father's purposes have been mistook;  
And some about him have too lavishly  
Wrested his meaning and authority.  
My lord, these griefs shall be with speed redress'd;  
Upon my soul, they shall. If this may please you, 60  
Discharge your powers unto their several counties,  
As we will ours: and here between the armies  
Let's drink together friendly and embrace,  
That all their eyes may bear those tokens home  
Of our restored love and amity.

ARCH. I take your princely word for these redresses.

LAN. I give it you, and will maintain my word:  
And thereupon I drink unto your grace.

HAST. Go, captain, and deliver to the army  
This news of peace: let them have pay, and part: 70  
I know it will well please them. Hie thee, captain.

*[Exit Officer.]*

ARCH. To you, my noble Lord of Westmoreland.

WEST. I pledge your grace; and, if you knew what  
pains

I have bestow'd to breed this present peace,

54 *allow*] approve.

61 *Discharge your powers*] According to Holinshed, Westmoreland, not Prince John, made this treacherous proposal.

You would drink freely: but my love to ye  
Shall show itself more openly hereafter.

ARCH. I do not doubt you.

WEST. I am glad of it.

Health to my lord and gentle cousin, Mowbray.

MOWB. You wish me health in very happy season;  
For I am, on the sudden, something ill. 80

ARCH. Against ill chances men are ever merry;  
But heaviness foreruns the good event.

WEST. Therefore be merry, coz; since sudden sorrow  
Serves to say thus, "some good thing comes to-morrow."

ARCH. Believe me, I am passing light in spirit.

MOWB. So much the worse, if your own rule be true.

[*Shouts within.*]

LAN. The word of peace is render'd: hark, how they  
shout!

MOWB. This had been cheerful after victory.

ARCH. A peace is of the nature of a conquest;  
For then both parties nobly are subdued, 90  
And neither party loser.

LAN. Go, my lord,  
And let our army be discharged too. [*Exit Westmoreland.*]  
And, good my lord, so please you, let our trains  
March by us, that we may peruse the men  
We should have coped withal.

---

82 *heaviness*] sadness, anxiety.

84 *Serves to say*] Has the effect of saying.

93-94 *let our trains March by us*] This is the original reading. The meaning is, "Let the forces on each side march beside us." Capell read *your trains*, on the ground that the prince aimed at inspecting only the strength of the other side. But there is no need of change.



## THE SECOND PART OF - ACT IV

---

ARCH. Go, good Lord Hastings,  
And, ere they be dismiss'd, let them march by.

[*Exit Hastings.*]

LAN. I trust, lords, we shall lie to-night together.

*Re-enter WESTMORELAND*

Now, cousin, wherefore stands our army still?

WEST. The leaders, having charge from you to stand,  
Will not go off until they hear you speak. 100

LAN. They know their duties.

*Re-enter HASTINGS*

HAST. My lord, our army is dispersed already:  
Like youthful steers unyoked, they take their courses  
East, west, north, south; or, like a school broke up,  
Each hurries toward his home and sporting-place.

WEST. Good tidings, my Lord Hastings; for the  
which

I do arrest thee, traitor, of high treason:  
And you, lord archbishop, and you, Lord Mowbray,  
Of capital treason I attach you both.

MOWB. Is this proceeding just and honourable? 110

WEST. Is your assembly so?

ARCH. Will you thus break your faith?

LAN. I pawn'd thee none:

I promised you redress of these same grievances  
Whereof you did complain; which, by mine honour,  
I will perform with a most Christian care.  
But for you, rebels, look to taste the due

109 *attach*] arrest.

Meet for rebellion and such acts as yours.  
Most shallowly did you these arms commence,  
Fondly brought here and foolishly sent hence.  
Strike up our drums, pursue the scatter'd stray: 120  
God, and not we, hath safely fought to-day.  
Some guard these traitors to the block of death,  
Treason's true bed and yielder up of breath. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE III — ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST

*Alarm. Excursions. Enter FALSTAFF and COLEVILE, meeting*

FAL. What's your name, sir? of what condition are you, and of what place, I pray?

COLE. I am a knight, sir; and my name is Colevile of the dale.

FAL. Well, then, Colevile is your name, a knight is your degree, and your place the dale: Colevile shall be still your name, a traitor your degree, and the dungeon your place, a place deep enough; so shall you be still Colevile of the dale.

COLE. Are not you Sir John Falstaff? 10

FAL. As good a man as he, sir, whoe'er I am. Do ye yield, sir? or shall I sweat for you? If I do sweat, they are the drops of thy lovers, and they weep for thy death: therefore rouse up fear and trembling, and do observance to my mercy.

120 *the scatter'd stray*] the rout, the dispersed force.

14-15 *do observance*] make obeisance.

COLE. I think you are Sir John Falstaff, and in that thought yield me.

FAL. I have a whole school of tongues in this belly of mine, and not a tongue of them all speaks any other word but my name. An I had but a belly of any in-<sup>20</sup> differency, I were simply the most active fellow in Europe: my womb, my womb, my womb, undoes me. Here comes our general.

*Enter PRINCE JOHN of LANCASTER, WESTMORELAND, BLUNT, and others*

LAN. The heat is past; follow no further now:  
Call in the powers, good cousin Westmoreland.

*[Exit Westmoreland.]*

Now, Falstaff, where have you been all this while?  
When every thing is ended, then you come:  
These tardy tricks of yours will, on my life,  
One time or other break some gallows' back.

FAL. I would be sorry, my lord, but it should be <sup>30</sup>  
thus: I never knew yet but rebuke and check was the  
reward of valour. Do you think me a swallow, an arrow,  
or a bullet? have I, in my poor and old motion, the ex-  
pedition of thought? I have speeded hither with the  
very extremest inch of possibility; I have foundered  
nine score and odd posts: and here, travel-tainted as I  
am, have, in my pure and immaculate valour, taken Sir  
John Coleville of the dale, a most furious knight and  
valorous enemy. But what of that? he saw me, and

<sup>20-21</sup> *of any indifference]* of any moderate size.

<sup>24</sup> *The heat is past]* The violence of resentment is over.

yielded; that I may justly say, with the hook-nosed 40  
fellow of Rome, "I came, saw, and overcame."

LAN. It was more of his courtesy than your deservng.

FAL. I know not: here he is, and here I yield him:  
and I beseech your grace, let it be booked with the rest  
of this day's deeds; or, by the Lord, I will have it in a  
particular ballad else, with mine own picture on the top  
on 't, Colevile kissing my foot: to the which course if I  
be enforced, if you do not all show like gilt two-pences  
to me, and I in the clear sky of fame o'ershine you as 50  
much as the full moon doth the cinders of the element,  
which show like pins' heads to her, believe not the word  
of the noble: therefore let me have right, and let desert  
mount.

LAN. Thine's too heavy to mount.

FAL. Let it shine, then.

LAN. Thine's too thick to shine.

FAL. Let it do something, my good lord, that may  
do me good, and call it what you will.

LAN. Is thy name Colevile?

60

COLE. It is, my lord.

LAN. A famous rebel art thou, Colevile.

FAL. And a famous true subject took him.

COLE. I am, my lord, but as my betters are  
That led me hither: had they been ruled by me,  
You should have won them dearer than you have.

FAL. I know not how they sold themselves: but thou,

41 "*I came, saw, and overcame*" Cf., for this reference to Julius Caesar,

II, ii, 118, *supra*, and note.

51 *cinders of the element*] stars.

like a kind fellow, gavest thyself away gratis; and I thank thee for thee.

*Re-enter WESTMORELAND*

LAN. Now, have you left pursuit?

70

WEST. Retreat is made and execution stay'd.

LAN. Send Colevile with his confederates  
To York, to present execution:

Blunt, lead him hence; and see you guard him sure.

*[Exeunt Blunt and others with Colevile.]*

And now dispatch we toward the court, my lords:

I hear the king my father is sore sick:

Our news shall go before us to his majesty,

Which, cousin, you shall bear to comfort him;

And we with sober speed will follow you.

FAL. My lord, I beseech you, give me leave to go 80  
Through Gloucestershire: and, when you come to court,  
Stand my good lord, pray, in your good report.

LAN. Fare you well, Falstaff: I, in my condition,  
Shall better speak of you than you deserve.

*[Exeunt all except Falstaff.]*

FAL. I would you had but the wit: 't were better  
than your dukedom. Good faith, this same young sober-  
blooded boy doth not love me; nor a man cannot make  
him laugh; but that's no marvel, he drinks no wine.  
There's never none of these demure boys come to any

82 *Stand my good lord . . . report]* Be my benefactor in the good account you give of me.

83 *in my condition]* in my position as general, in my official capacity.

89-90 *come to any proof]* give any proof of ability.

proof; for thin drink doth so over-cool their blood. and 90  
making many fish-meals, that they fall into a kind of  
male green-sickness; and then, when they marry, they  
get wenches: they are generally fools and cowards;  
which some of us should be too, but for inflammation.  
A good sherris-sack hath a two-fold operation in it. It  
ascends me into the brain; dries me there all the foolish  
and dull and crudy vapours which environ it; makes it  
apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery and  
delectable shapes; which, delivered o'er to the voice,  
the tongue, which is the birth, becomes excellent wit.  
The second property of your excellent sherris is, the  
warming of the blood; which, before cold and settled,  
left the liver white and pale, which is the badge of  
pusillanimity and cowardice; but the sherris warms it  
and makes it course from the inwards to the parts ex-  
treme: it illumineth the face, which as a beacon gives  
warning to all the rest of this little kingdom, man, to  
arm; and then the vital commoners and inland petty  
spirits muster me all to their captain, the heart, who,  
great and puffed up with this retinue, doth any deed of  
courage; and this valour comes of sherris. So that skill  
in the weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it  
a-work; and learning a mere hoard of gold kept by a

92 *green-sickness*] chlorosis; a malady incident to girls.

95 *sherris-sack*] sherry-wine, sack coming from Xeres. Cf. "sherris,"  
101, 104, 111, 119, *infra*.

98 *apprehensive* . . . *forgetive*] quick to understand . . . able to forge,  
imaginative. Cf. *Hen. V*, Act V, *Prol.* 23: "In the quick *forge*  
and working house of thought."

108 *inland*] provincial.

devil, till sack commences it and sets it in act and use. Hereof comes it that Prince Harry is valiant; for the cold blood he did naturally inherit of his father, he hath, like lean sterile and bare land, manured, husbanded and tilled with excellent endeavour of drinking good and good store of fertile sherris, that he is become very hot and valiant. If I had a thousand sons, the first humane principle I would teach them should be, to forswear thin potations, and to addict themselves to sack. 122

*Enter BARDOLPH*

How now, Bardolph?

BARD. The army is discharged all and gone.

FAL. Let them go. I'll through Gloucestershire; and there will I visit Master Robert Shallow, esquire: I have him already tempering between my finger and my thumb, and shortly will I seal with him. Come away. *[Exeunt.]*

---

114 *till sack commences it*] The word "commence" was academically used of taking the degree of bachelor of arts, from the Cambridge term "commencement," that is, the ceremony of conferring the degree. Sack is here said to give learning its diploma for active service.

127 *tempering*] in process of fashioning like wax. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 565: "What *wax* so frozen but dissolves with *tempering*?"

## SCENE IV — WESTMINSTER

## THE JERUSALEM CHAMBER

*Enter the KING, the PRINCES THOMAS of CLARENCE and HUMPHREY of GLOUCESTER, WARWICK, and others*

KING. Now, lords, if God doth give successful end  
To this debate that bleedeth at our doors,  
We will our youth lead on to higher fields  
And draw no swords but what are sanctified.  
Our navy is address'd, our power collected,  
Our substitutes in absence well invested,  
And every thing lies level to our wish:  
Only, we want a little personal strength;  
And pause us, till these rebels, now afoot,  
Come underneath the yoke of government.

10

WAR. Both which we doubt not but your majesty  
Shall soon enjoy.

KING. Humphrey, my son of Gloucester,  
Where is the prince your brother?

GLOU. I think he's gone to hunt, my lord, at Windsor.

KING. And how accompanied?

GLOU. I do not know, my lord.

2 *debate*] contention, war, quarrel.

3 *We will . . . to higher fields*] A reference to the crusade, which Henry IV had promised to lead to the Holy Land at the beginning of the reign. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, i, 18-30. The revival of the scheme belongs to Henry IV's dying days.

5 *address'd*] ready, prepared.



KING. Is not his brother, Thomas of Clarence, with him?

GLOU. No, my good lord; he is in presence here.

CLAR. What would my lord and father?

KING. Nothing but well to thee, Thomas of Clarence.  
 How chance thou art not with the prince thy brother? 20  
 He loves thee, and thou dost neglect him, Thomas;  
 Thou hast a better place in his affection  
 Than all thy brothers: cherish it, my boy,  
 And noble offices thou mayst effect  
 Of mediation, after I am dead,  
 Between his greatness and thy other brethren:  
 Therefore omit him not; blunt not his love,  
 Nor lose the good advantage of his grace  
 By seeming cold or careless of his will;  
 For he is gracious, if he be observed: 30  
 He hath a tear for pity, and a hand  
 Open as day for melting charity:  
 Yet notwithstanding, being incensed, he's flint,  
 As humorous as winter, and as sudden  
 As flaws congealed in the spring of day.  
 His temper, therefore, must be well observed:  
 Chide him for faults, and do it reverently,  
 When you perceive his blood inclined to mirth;

27 omit] neglect.

30 observed] treated with attention.

34 humorous as winter] capricious, changeable as the weather of a winter's day.

35 flaws . . . day] sudden gusts of wind, cold as congealed ice, which, blowing up in the sunshine, betoken the approach of spring. Cf. 2 Hen. VI, III, i, 354: "calm the fury of this mad-bred flaw."

But, being moody, give him line and scope,  
 Till that his passions, like a whale on ground, 40  
 Confound themselves with working. Learn this,  
 Thomas,

And thou shalt prove a shelter to thy friends,  
 A hoop of gold to bind thy brothers in,  
 That the united vessel of their blood,  
 Mingled with venom of suggestion —  
 As, force perforce, the age will pour it in —  
 Shall never leak, though it do work as strong  
 As aconitum or rash gunpowder.

CLAR. I shall observe him with all care and love.

KING. Why art thou not at Windsor with him,  
 Thomas? 50

CLAR. He is not there to-day; he dines in London.

KING. And how accompanied? canst thou tell that?

CLAR. With Poins, and other his continual followers.

KING. Most subject is the fattest soil to weeds;  
 And he, the noble image of my youth,  
 Is overspread with them: therefore my grief  
 Stretches itself beyond the hour of death:  
 The blood weeps from my heart when I do shape,  
 In forms imaginary, the unguided days

45 *Mingled with . . . suggestion*] Though their blood be infected by the temptations to which youth is subject.

46 *force perforce*] of absolute necessity. Cf. IV, i, 116, *supra*.

47 *it*] i. e., the "venom of suggestion" of line 45.

48 *aconitum*] aconite, wolf'sbane.  
*rash*] explosive.

53 *With Poins*] Nothing further is heard of this character either in this play or its sequels, *Hen. V* and *M. Wives*.

And rotten times that you shall look upon, 80  
When I am sleeping with my ancestors.  
For when his headstrong riot hath no curb,  
When rage and hot blood are his counsellors,  
When means and lavish manners meet together,  
O, with what wings shall his affections fly  
Towards fronting peril and opposed decay!

WAR. My gracious lord, you look beyond him quite:  
The prince but studies his companions  
Like a strange tongue, wherein, to gain the language,  
'T is needful that the most immodest word 70  
Be look'd upon and learn'd; which once attain'd,  
Your highness knows, comes to no further use  
But to be known and hated. So, like gross terms,  
The prince will in the perfectness of time  
Cast off his followers; and their memory  
Shall as a pattern or a measure live,  
By which his grace must mete the lives of others,  
Turning past evils to advantages.

KING. 'T is seldom when the bee doth leave her comb  
In the dead carrion.

*Enter WESTMORELAND*

Who's here? Westmoreland? 80

WEST. Health to my sovereign, and new happiness

65 *affections*] passions. Cf. V, ii, 124, *infra*.

67 *look beyond him*] overstate his defects.

79-80 'T is seldom . . . carrion] The bee having once located her honey-comb in a carcass is unwilling to desert the honey she stores there. The implication is that the man who once finds pleasure in low company will be unwilling to abandon it.

Added to that that I am to deliver !  
Prince John your son doth kiss your grace's hand :  
Mowbray, the Bishop Scroop, Hastings and all  
Are brought to the correction of your law ;  
There is not now a rebel's sword unsheathed,  
But Peace puts forth her olive every where.  
The manner how this action hath been borne  
Here at more leisure may your highness read,  
With every course in his particular.

90

KING. O Westmoreland, thou art a summer bird,  
Which ever in the haunch of winter sings  
The lifting up of day.

*Enter* HARCOURT

Look, here's more news.

HAR. From enemies heaven keep your majesty ;  
And, when they stand against you, may they fall  
As those that I am come to tell you of !  
The Earl Northumberland and the Lord Bardolph,  
With a great power of English and of Scots,  
Are by the sheriff of Yorkshire overthrown :  
The manner and true order of the fight,  
This packet, please it you, contains at large.

100

90 *in his particular*] in its special details.

92 *haunch*] end.

92-93 *sings The lifting up of day*] foretells in song the lengthening-out  
of day.

97 *Earl Northumberland*] The defeat and death of Northumberland took  
place on Bramham Moor on 19 February, 1408. But Shakespeare  
places the scene in the last days of Henry IV's reign, in 1413. Cf.  
line 3, *supra*.

KING. And wherefore should these good news make me sick?

Will Fortune never come with both hands full,  
But write her fair words still in foulest letters?  
She either gives a stomach and no food;  
Such are the poor, in health; or else a feast  
And takes away the stomach; such are the rich,  
That have abundance and enjoy it not.  
I should rejoice now at this happy news;  
And now my sight fails, and my brain is giddy: 110  
O me! come near me; now I am much ill.

GLOU. Comfort, your majesty!

CLAR. O my royal father!

WEST. My sovereign lord, cheer up yourself, look up.

WAR. Be patient, princes; you do know, these fits  
Are with his highness very ordinary.

Stand from him, give him air; he'll straight be well.

CLAR. No, no, he cannot long hold out these pangs:  
The incessant care and labour of his mind  
Hath wrought the mure, that should confine it in,  
So thin that life looks through and will break out. 120

GLOU. The people fear me; for they do observe  
Unfather'd heirs and loathly births of nature:  
The seasons change their manners, as the year  
Had found some months asleep and leap'd them over.

119 *wrought the mure*] worn away the wall of flesh.

121 *fear me*] cause me fear or anxiety; alarm me.

122 *Unfather'd heirs*] Elves not begotten of mortal men but miraculously created by divine or demoniac powers. Cf. *M. Wives*, V, v, 37: "*orphan heirs*."

CLAR. The river hath thrice flow'd, no ebb between;  
 And the old folk, time's doting chronicles,  
 Say it did so a little time before  
 That our great-grandsire, Edward, sick'd and died.

WAR. Speak lower, princes, for the king recovers.

GLOU. This apoplexy will certain be his end. 190

KING. I pray you, take me up, and bear me hence  
 Into some other chamber: softly, pray. [Exeunt.

### SCENE V — ANOTHER CHAMBER

*The KING lying on a bed: CLARENCE, GLOUCESTER, WARWICK,  
 and others in attendance*

KING. Let there be no noise made, my gentle friends;  
 Unless some dull and favourable hand  
 Will whisper music to my weary spirit.

WAR. Call for the music in the other room.

KING. Set me the crown upon my pillow here.

CLAR. His eye is hollow, and he changes much.

WAR. Less noise, less noise!

125-128 *The river . . . died*] Holinsb. credits the river Thames with three flood tides on 12 October, 1411, a long period before Henry IV's death. No authority is known for Shakespeare's account of a similar portent before the death of Edward III (line 128).

1 *Let there be no noise*] No new scene is indicated here in the Folios. Dyce was the first editor to suggest it. But it is clear from lines 233-235, *infra*, that the king's swoon, which is portrayed at lines 110 *seq.* of the scene just ended, took place in the Jerusalem chamber of Westminster Abbey, and that the royal patient was removed immediately to "some other chamber" (l. 132, *supra*) in the palace at Westminster, where the episode which now follows took place.

2 *dull and favourable hand*] slow, drowsy, and soothing musician's hand.

THE SECOND PART OF      ACT IV

*Enter PRINCE HENRY*

PRINCE.                      Who saw the Duke of Clarence?

CLAR. I am here, brother, full of heaviness.

PRINCE. How now! rain within doors, and none  
abroad!

How doth the king?

10

GLOU. Exceeding ill.

PRINCE.                      Heard he the good news yet?

Tell it him.

GLOU. He alter'd much upon the hearing it.

PRINCE. If he be sick with joy, he'll recover without  
physic.

WAR. Not so much noise, my lords: sweet prince,  
speak low;

The king your father is disposed to sleep.

CLAR. Let us withdraw into the other room.

WAR. Will 't please your grace to go along with us?

PRINCE. No; I will sit and watch here by the king. <sup>20</sup>

*[Exeunt all except the Prince.]*

Why doth the crown lie there upon his pillow,

Being so troublesome a bedfellow?

O polish'd perturbation! golden care!

That keep'st the ports of slumber open wide

To many a watchful night! sleep with it now!

Yet not so sound and half so deeply sweet

As he whose brow with homely biggen bound

Snores out the watch of night. O majesty!

<sup>24</sup> *the ports of slumber*] the gates of slumber, the eyes.

<sup>27</sup> *biggen*] nightcap, head-band of coarse cloth.

When thou dost pinch thy bearer, thou dost sit  
Like a rich armour worn in heat of day, 30  
That scalds with safety. By his gates of breath  
There lies a downy feather which stirs not:  
Did he suspire, that light and weightless down  
Perforce must move. My gracious lord! my father!  
This sleep is sound indeed; this is a sleep,  
That from this golden rigol hath divorced  
So many English kings. Thy due from me  
Is tears and heavy sorrows of the blood,  
Which nature, love, and filial tenderness,  
Shall, O dear father, pay thee plenteously: 40  
My due from thee is this imperial crown,  
Which, as immediate from thy place and blood,  
Derives itself to me. Lo, here it sits,  
Which God shall guard: and put the world's whole  
strength  
Into one giant arm, it shall not force  
This lineal honour from me: this from thee  
Will I to mine leave, as 't is left to me. [Exit.  
KING. Warwick! Gloucester! Clarence!

*Re-enter WARWICK, GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and the rest*

CLAR. Doth the king call?

WAR. What would your majesty? How fares your  
grace? 50

31 *with safety*] while it gives protection.

33 *suspire*] breathe lightly.

36 *rigol*] circle; a rare word, only used elsewhere by Shakespeare in *Lucrece*, 1745, "a watery *rigol*." It is derived from the Italian "*rigolo*," i. e., a little wheel (Florio).



KING. Why did you leave me here alone, my lords?

CLAR. We left the prince my brother here, my liege,  
Who undertook to sit and watch by you.

KING. The Prince of Wales! Where is he? let me  
see him:

He is not here.

WAR. This door is open; he is gone this way.

GLOU. He came not through the chamber where we  
stay'd.

KING. Where is the crown? who took it from my  
pillow?

WAR. When we withdrew, my liege, we left it here.

KING. The prince hath ta'en it hence: go, seek him out. 60  
Is he so hasty that he doth suppose

My sleep my death?

Find him, my Lord of Warwick; chide him hither.

[Exit Warwick.]

This part of his conjoins with my disease,  
And helps to end me. See, sons, what things you are!  
How quickly nature falls into revolt  
When gold becomes her object!  
For this the foolish over-careful fathers  
Have broke their sleep with thoughts, their brains with  
care,

60-65 *The prince hath ta'en . . . you are*] Capell arranges these six lines thus. Their irregular metre dramatically suggests the king's perturbation of mind. The Folios divided the passage into seven lines of varied lengths. The Quarto condenses them into five, and only differs from the arrangement adopted here by making lines 61 and 62 (*Is he so . . . my death?*) one line.

64 *This part*] This rôle.

Their bones with industry ; 70  
 For this they have engrossed and piled up  
 The canker'd heaps of strange-achieved gold ;  
 For this they have been thoughtful to invest  
 Their sons with arts and martial exercises :  
 When, like the bee, culling from every flower  
 The virtuous sweets,  
 Our thighs pack'd with wax, our mouths with honey,  
 We bring it to the hive ; and, like the bees,  
 Are murder'd for our pains. This bitter taste  
 Yield his engrossments to the ending father. 80

*Re-enter WARWICK*

Now, where is he that will not stay so long  
 Till his friend sickness hath determined me ?

WAR. My lord, I found the prince in the next room,  
 Washing with kindly tears his gentle cheeks,  
 With such a deep demeanour in great sorrow,  
 That tyranny, which never quaff'd but blood,  
 Would, by beholding him, have wash'd his knife  
 With gentle eye-drops. He is coming hither.

KING. But wherefore did he take away the crown ?

71 *engrossed*] amassed.

72 *The canker'd . . . gold*] The corrupt stores of gold derived from foreign lands.

80 *Yield . . . father*] The accumulations of wealth yield to the dying father.

81-82 *will not stay so long Till . . . determined me*] will not wait until his friendly ally, my illness, has made an end of me.

84 *kindly tears*] tears of natural affection.

# THE SECOND PART OF      ACT IV

*Re-enter PRINCE HENRY*

Lo, where he comes. Come hither to me, Harry.      90  
Depart the chamber, leave us here alone.

*[Exeunt Warwick and the rest.]*

PRINCE. I never thought to hear you speak again.

KING. Thy wish was father, Harry, to that thought:  
I stay too long by thee, I weary thee.

Dost thou so hunger for mine empty chair  
That thou wilt needs invest thee with my honours  
Before thy hour be ripe? O foolish youth!  
Thou seek'st the greatness that will overwhelm thee.  
Stay but a little; for my cloud of dignity  
Is held from falling with so weak a wind      100  
That it will quickly drop: my day is dim.

Thou hast stolen that which after some few hours  
Were thine without offence; and at my death  
Thou hast seal'd up my expectation:  
Thy life did manifest thou lovedst me not,  
And thou wilt have me die assured of it.  
Thou hidest a thousand daggers in thy thoughts,  
Which thou hast whetted on thy stony heart,  
To stab at half an hour of my life.

What! canst thou not forbear me half an hour?      110  
Then get thee gone and dig my grave thyself,  
And bid the merry bells ring to thine ear  
That thou art crowned, not that I am dead.  
Let all the tears that should bedew my hearse

---

103-104 *at my death . . . seal'd up]* in the hour of my death thou  
hast confirmed.

Be drops of balm to sanctify thy head:  
Only compound me with forgotten dust;  
Give that which gave thee life unto the worms.  
Pluck down my officers, break my decrees;  
For now a time is come to mock at form:  
Harry the fifth is crown'd: up, vanity! 120  
Down, royal state! all you sage counsellors, hence!  
And to the English court assemble now,  
From every region, apes of idleness!  
Now, neighbour confines, purge you of your scum:  
Have you a ruffian that will swear, drink, dance,  
Revel the night, rob, murder, and commit  
The oldest sins the newest kind of ways?  
Be happy, he will trouble you no more;  
England shall double gild his treble guilt,  
England shall give him office, honour, might; 130  
For the fifth Harry from curb'd license plucks  
The muzzle of restraint, and the wild dog  
Shall flesh his tooth on every innocent.  
O my poor kingdom, sick with civil blows!  
When that my care could not withhold thy riots,  
What wilt thou do when riot is thy care?  
O, thou wilt be a wilderness again,  
Peopled with wolves, thy old inhabitants!

129 *gild . . . guilt*] a very poor and inappropriate pun, but one to which Shakespeare seems to have been incorrigibly addicted. Cf. *Hen. V*, Act II, *Cho.* 26: "the *gilt* of France . . . O *guilt* indeed," and *Macb.*, II, ii, 56-57, "I'll *gild* the faces of the grooms withal, For it must seem their *guilt*."

132 *the wild dog*] unmuzzled license.

136 *thy care*] thy regular business.

PRINCE. O, pardon me, my liege! but for my tears,  
 The moist impediments unto my speech, 140  
 I had forestall'd this dear and deep rebuke,  
 Ere you with grief had spoke and I had heard  
 The course of it so far. There is your crown;  
 And He that wears the crown immortally  
 Long guard it yours! If I affect it more  
 Than as your honour and as your renown,  
 Let me no more from this obedience rise,  
 Which my most inward true and duteous spirit  
 Teacheth, this prostrate and exterior bending.  
 God witness with me, when I here came in, 150  
 And found no course of breath within your majesty,  
 How cold it struck my heart! If I do feign,  
 O, let me in my present wildness die,  
 And never live to show the incredulous world  
 The noble change that I have purposed!  
 Coming to look on you, thinking you dead,  
 And dead almost, my liege, to think you were,  
 I spake unto this crown as having sense,  
 And thus upbraided it: "The care on thee depending  
 Hath fed upon the body of my father; 160  
 Therefore, thou best of gold art worst of gold:  
 Other, less fine in carat, is more precious,  
 Preserving life in medicine potable;

141 *dear and deep*] potent and piercing.

147-149 *Let me no more . . . bending*] Let me no more rise from this attitude of obeisance, this outward act of prostration, which my loyalty and inward sense of duty prompt.

163 *medicine potable*] an allusion to a liquid solution or tincture of gold, which was regarded of great value as a medicine.

But thou, most fine, most honour'd, most renown'd,  
Hast eat thy bearer up." Thus, my most royal liege,  
Accusing it, I put it on my head,  
To try with it, as with an enemy  
That had before my face murder'd my father,  
The quarrel of a true inheritor.  
But if it did infect my blood with joy, 170  
Or swell my thoughts to any strain of pride;  
If any rebel or vain spirit of mine  
Did with the least affection of a welcome  
Give entertainment to the might of it,  
Let God for ever keep it from my head,  
And make me as the poorest vassal is,  
That doth with awe and terror kneel to it!

KING. O my son,  
God put it in thy mind to take it hence,  
That thou mightst win the more thy father's love, 180  
Pleading so wisely in excuse of it!  
Come hither, Harry, sit thou by my bed;  
And hear, I think, the very latest counsel  
That ever I shall breathe. God knows, my son,  
By what by-paths and indirect crook'd ways  
I met this crown; and I myself know well  
How troublesome it sat upon my head.  
To thee it shall descend with better quiet,  
Better opinion, better confirmation;  
For all the soil of the achievement goes 190  
With me into the earth. It seem'd in me  
But as an honour snatch'd with boisterous hand,

190 *soil*] stain, reproach.

And I had many living to upbraid  
 My gain of it by their assistances;  
 Which daily grew to quarrel and to bloodshed,  
 Wounding supposed peace: all these bold fears  
 Thou see'st with peril I have answered;  
 For all my reign hath been but as a scene  
 Acting that argument: and now my death  
 Changes the mode; for what in me was purchased, 200  
 Falls upon thee in a more fairer sort;  
 So thou the garland wear'st successively.  
 Yet, though thou stand'st more sure than I could do,  
 Thou art not firm enough, since griefs are green;  
 And all my friends, which thou must make thy friends,  
 Have but their stings and teeth newly ta'en out;  
 By whose fell working I was first advanced  
 And by whose power I well might lodge a fear  
 To be again displaced: which to avoid,  
 I cut them off; and had a purpose now 210  
 To lead out many to the Holy Land,  
 Lest rest and lying still might make them look

196 *supposed*] unreal, imaginary.

*bold fears*] signal dangers (*i. e.*, causes of fear).

197 *answered*] faced.

200 *mode*] position of affairs.

*purchased*] a legal term for acquiring property by one's own act.

But the word had often colloquially a bad shade of meaning,  
 hardly differing from "purloin."

202 *successively*] by inheritance, in order of succession.

205 *all my friends*] a needful correction of the original reading *all thy friends*.

210 *I cut them off*] I held them aloof from me.

Too near unto my state. Therefore, my Harry,  
Be it thy course to busy giddy minds  
With foreign quarrels; that action, hence borne out,  
May waste the memory of the former days.  
More would I, but my lungs are wasted so  
That strength of speech is utterly denied me.  
How I came by the crown, O God forgive;  
And grant it may with thee in true peace live! 220

PRINCE. My gracious liege,  
You won it, wore it, kept it, gave it me;  
Then plain and right must my possession be:  
Which I with more than with a common pain  
'Gainst all the world will rightfully maintain.

*Enter LORD JOHN of LANCASTER*

KING. Look, look, here comes my John of Lancaster.

LAN. Health, peace, and happiness to my royal  
father!

KING. Thou bring'st me happiness and peace, son  
John;

But health, alack, with youthful wings is flown  
From this bare wither'd trunk: upon thy sight 230  
My worldly business makes a period.  
Where is my Lord of Warwick?

PRINCE. My Lord of Warwick!

*Re-enter WARWICK, and others*

KING. Doth any name particular belong  
Unto the lodging where I first did swoon?

234 *the lodging*] the apartment.



## SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV ACT IV

---

WAR. 'T is call'd Jerusalem, my noble lord.

KING. Laud be to God ! even there my life must end.  
It hath been prophesied to me many years,  
I should not die but in Jerusalem ;  
Which vainly I supposed the Holy Land :  
But bear me to that chamber ; there I 'll lie ;  
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die.

240

*[Exeunt.]*

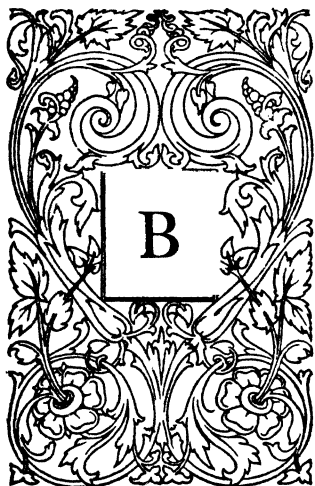


# ACT FIFTH—SCENE I—GLOUCESTERSHIRE

## SHALLOW'S HOUSE

*Enter SHALLOW, FALSTAFF, BARDOLPH, and Page*

SHALLOW



Y COCK AND PIE, SIR,  
you shall not away to-night.  
What, Davy, I say!

FAL. You must excuse me,  
Master Robert Shallow.

SHAL. I will not excuse you;  
you shall not be excused; ex-  
cuses shall not be admitted;  
there is no excuse shall serve;  
you shall not be excused. Why,  
Davy!

*Enter DAVY*

DAVY. Here, sir.

SHAL. Davy, Davy, Davy, Davy, let me see, Davy;  
let me see, Davy; let me see: yea, marry, William

1 *By cock and pie*] A popular petty oath: "cock" seems a corruption  
of God, while "pie" was a name given to the Roman Catholic

cook, bid him come hither. Sir John, you shall not be 10 excused.

DAVY. Marry, sir, thus; those precepts cannot be served: and, again, sir, shall we sow the headland with wheat?

SHAL. With red wheat, Davy. But for William cook: are there no young pigeons?

DAVY. Yes, sir. Here is now the smith's note for shoeing and plough-irons.

SHAL. Let it be cast and paid. Sir John, you shall 20 not be excused.

DAVY. Now, sir, a new link to the bucket must needs be had: and, sir, do you mean to stop any of William's wages, about the sack he lost the other day at Hinckley fair?

ordinal or service-book. The reference was vulgarly understood to be to the birds, the cock and the magpie. "The Cock and Pie" became a common sign for taverns.

9-10 *William cook, bid him*] bid William the cook.

12 *precepts*] writs or summonses, which it was the office of Davy, the justice's factotum, to serve on debtors or witnesses.

13 *the headland*] probably here a field on a high ground, a field on a hill. The headland commonly meant a strip of unploughed or uncultivated land bordering a ploughed field.

15 *red wheat*] wheat which was sown in early autumn, and was known in the country of the Cotswolds as "red lammas wheat." This practice of wheat-sowing appears to have been almost peculiar to the Cotswold country, a district with which Shakespeare gives many signs of familiarity. Cf. *M. Wives*, I, i, 80, and III, ii, 20, *supra*. Cf. also Mr. Justice Madden's Diary of Master William Silence, pp. 89, *seq.*

17 *smith's note*] blacksmith's account or bill.

19 *cast*] added up (and verified).

23 *Hinckley*] a market-town of Warwickshire, northeast of Coventry.

SHAL. A' shall answer it. Some pigeons, Davy, a couple of short-legged hens, a joint of mutton, and any pretty little tiny kickshaws, tell William cook.

DAVY. Doth the man of war stay all night, sir?

SHAL. Yea, Davy. I will use him well: a friend i' the court is better than a penny in purse. Use his men <sup>30</sup> well, Davy; for they are arrant knaves, and will back-bite.

DAVY. No worse than they are backbitten, sir; for they have marvellous foul linen.

SHAL. Well conceited, Davy: about thy business, Davy.

DAVY. I beseech you, sir, to countenance William Visor of Woncot against Clement Perkes o' the hill.

SHAL. There is many complaints, Davy, against that Visor: that Visor is an arrant knave, on my knowledge.

DAVY. I grant your worship that he is a knave, sir; <sup>40</sup> but yet, God forbid, sir, but a knave should have some countenance at his friend's request. An honest man, sir, is able to speak for himself, when a knave is not. I have served your worship truly, sir, this eight years;

25 *A' shall answer it*] He shall be answerable for it.

27 *kickshaws*] fancy dishes, French dishes.

29-30 *a friend i' the court . . . purse*] a proverb of antiquity.

36-37 *William Visor of Woncot . . . hill*] Woncot is still the local pronunciation of Woodmancote, a village in Gloucestershire, where a family of Visor or Vizard has resided from time immemorial, and is still represented. Adjoining the village of Woodmancote is Stinchcombe Hill, known locally as "The Hill," where a family named Perkes is shown by local records to have dwelt for many generations.

and if I cannot once or twice in a quarter bear out a knave against an honest man, I have but a very little credit with your worship. The knave is mine honest friend, sir; therefore, I beseech your worship, let him be countenanced.

SHAL. Go to; I say he shall have no wrong. Look <sup>50</sup> about, Davy. [*Exit Davy.*] Where are you, Sir John? Come, come, come, off with your boots. Give me your hand, Master Bardolph.

BARD. I am glad to see your worship.

SHAL. I thank thee with all my heart, kind Master Bardolph: and welcome, my tall fellow [*to the Page*]. Come, Sir John.

FAL. I'll follow you, good Master Robert Shallow. [*Exit Shallow.*] Bardolph, look to our horses. [*Exeunt Bardolph and Page.*] If I were sawed into quantities, I should make <sup>60</sup> four dozen of such bearded hermits' staves as Master Shallow. It is a wonderful thing to see the semblable coherence of his men's spirits and his: they, by observing of him, do bear themselves like foolish justices; he, by conversing with them, is turned into a justice-like serving-man: their spirits are so married in conjunction with the participation of society that they flock together in consent, like so many wild-geese. If I had a suit to Master Shallow, I would humour his men with the imputation of being near their master: if to his men, I <sup>70</sup>

45 *bear out*] stand up for, espouse the cause of.

60 *quantities*] fragments, pieces.

62-63 *semblable coherence*] close resemblance or identity.

68 *in consent*] in unison.

70 *near their master*] on intimate terms with their master.

would curry with Master Shallow that no man could better command his servants. It is certain that either wise bearing or ignorant carriage is caught, as men take diseases, one of another: therefore let men take heed of their company. I will devise matter enough out of this Shallow to keep Prince Harry in continual laughter the wearing out of six fashions, which is four terms, or two actions, and a' shall laugh without intervallums. O, it is much that a lie with a slight oath and a jest with a sad brow will do with a fellow that never had the ache<sup>80</sup> in his shoulders! O, you shall see him laugh till his face be like a wet cloak ill laid up!

SHAL. [*Within*] Sir John!

FAL. I come, Master Shallow; I come, Master Shallow. [*Exit.*]

## SCENE II — WESTMINSTER

### THE PALACE

*Enter WARWICK and the LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, meeting*

WAR. How now, my lord chief justice! whither away?

CH. JUST. How doth the king?

WAR. Exceeding well; his cares are now all ended.

CH. JUST. I hope, not dead.

77-78 *four terms, or two actions*] four law terms, or the space of time occupied by the various stages of two actions at law.

79-80 *a jest . . . brow*] a jest told with a serious face.

80-81 *a fellow . . . shoulders*] a fellow that never felt a touch of age.

82 *ill laid up*] ill folded, all tumbled.

WAR. He's walked th' way of nature;  
And to our purposes he lives no more.

CH. JUST. I would his majesty had call'd me with  
him:

The service that I truly did his life  
Hath left me open to all injuries.

WAR. Indeed I think the young king loves you not.

CH. JUST. I know he doth not, and do arm myself 10  
To welcome the condition of the time,  
Which cannot look more hideously upon me  
Than I have drawn it in my fantasy.

*Enter LANCASTER, CLARENCE, GLOUCESTER, WESTMORELAND,  
and others*

WAR. Here come the heavy issue of dead Harry:  
O that the living Harry had the temper  
Of him, the worst of these three gentlemen!  
How many nobles then should hold their places,  
That must strike sail to spirits of vile sort!

CH. JUST. O God, I fear all will be overturn'd!

LAN. Good morrow, cousin Warwick, good morrow. 20

GLOU. } Good morrow, cousin.  
CLAR. }

LAN. We meet like men that had forgot to speak.

WAR. We do remember; but our argument  
Is all too heavy to admit much talk.

14 *heavy issue*] sorrow-stricken sons.

16 *Of him, the worst*] Of the one who is the worst.

17 *hold*] keep.

18 *strike sail to*] give place to.

23 *our argument*] the theme of our thought.

LAN. Well, peace be with him that hath made us heavy!

CH. JUST. Peace be with us, lest we be heavier!

GLOU. O, good my lord, you have lost a friend indeed;  
And I dare swear you borrow not that face  
Of seeming sorrow, it is sure your own.

LAN. Though no man be assured what grace to find, 30  
You stand in coldest expectation:  
I am the sorrier; would 't were otherwise.

CLAR. Well, you must now speak Sir John Falstaff  
fair;  
Which swims against your stream of quality.

CH. JUST. Sweet princes, what I did, I did in honour,  
Led by the impartial conduct of my soul;  
And never shall you see that I will beg  
A ragged and forestall'd remission.  
If truth and upright innocency fail me,  
I'll to the king my master that is dead, 40  
And tell him who hath sent me after him.

WAR. Here comes the prince.

*Enter KING HENRY the fifth, attended*

CH. JUST. Good morrow, and God save your majesty!

KING. This new and gorgeous garment, majesty,

34 *Which swims . . . quality*] Which goes much against the grain in a man of your character.

38 *A ragged . . . remission*] An ignominious pardon that is preceded by a supplication. The Chief Justice means that he will only accept a free and unsolicited forgiveness for a deed that deserved no condemnation.



Sits not so easy on me as you think.  
Brothers, you mix your sadness with some fear:  
This is the English, not the Turkish court;  
Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,  
But Harry Harry. Yet be sad, good brothers,  
For, by my faith, it very well becomes you: 50  
Sorrow so royally in you appears  
That I will deeply put the fashion on,  
And wear it in my heart: why then, be sad;  
But entertain no more of it, good brothers,  
Than a joint burden laid upon us all.  
For me, by heaven, I bid you be assured,  
I'll be your father and your brother too;  
Let me but bear your love, I'll bear your cares:  
Yet weep that Harry's dead; and so will I;  
But Harry lives, that shall convert those tears 60  
By number into hours of happiness.

PRINCES. We hope no other from your majesty.

KING. You all look strangely on me: and you most;  
You are, I think, assured I love you not.

CH. JUST. I am assured, if I be measured rightly,  
Your majesty hath no just cause to hate me.

KING. No!

48 *Amurath*] A general reference to very recent Turkish history. Amurath, or Mourad III, sixth Sultan of the Turks, on succeeding to the throne of his father, Selim II, in 1574, caused all his brothers to be strangled. Amurath III died on 18 January, 1595-96, only some two or three years before Shakespeare wrote these words, and he was succeeded by his eldest son Mahomet III, who, following his father's example, caused all his brothers to be done to death.

61 *By number*] Tear for tear.

How might a prince of my great hopes forget  
 So great indignities you laid upon me?  
 What! rate, rebuke, and roughly send to prison 70  
 The immediate heir of England! Was this easy?  
 May this be wash'd in Lethe, and forgotten?

CH. JUST. I then did use the person of your father;  
 The image of his power lay then in me:  
 And, in the administration of his law,  
 Whiles I was busy for the commonwealth,  
 Your highness pleased to forget my place,  
 The majesty and power of law and justice,  
 The image of the king whom I presented,  
 And struck me in my very seat of judgement; 80  
 Whereon, as an offender to your father,  
 I gave bold way to my authority,  
 And did commit you. If the deed were ill,  
 Be you contented, wearing now the garland,  
 To have a son set your decrees at nought,  
 To pluck down justice from your awful bench,  
 To trip the course of law and blunt the sword  
 That guards the peace and safety of your person;  
 Nay, more, to spurn at your most royal image  
 And mock your workings in a second body. 90  
 Question your royal thoughts, make the case yours;  
 Be now the father and propose a son,

71 *Was this easy?* ] Was this a slight matter?

86 *awful*] in the ordinary sense of "reverend."

87 *trip . . . law*] defeat the process of justice.

90 *mock . . . body*] treat with scorn acts done in your name by a representative.

92 *propose a son*] imagine that you have a son.

Hear your own dignity so much profaned,  
See your most dreadful laws so loosely slighted,  
Behold yourself so by a son disdain'd;  
And then imagine me taking your part,  
And in your power soft silencing your son:  
After this cold considerance, sentence me;  
And, as you are a king, speak in your state  
What I have done that misbecame my place, 100  
My person, or my liege's sovereignty.

KING. You are right, justice, and you weigh this well;  
Therefore still bear the balance and the sword:  
And I do wish your honours may increase,  
Till you do live to see a son of mine  
Offend you, and obey you, as I did.  
So shall I live to speak my father's words:  
"Happy am I, that have a man so bold,  
That dares do justice on my proper son;  
And not less happy, having such a son, 110  
That would deliver up his greatness so  
Into the hands of justice." You did commit me:  
For which, I do commit into your hand  
The unstained sword that you have used to bear;  
With this remembrance, that you use the same  
With the like bold, just, and impartial spirit  
As you have done 'gainst me. There is my hand.  
You shall be as a father to my youth:  
My voice shall sound as you do prompt mine ear,

99 *in your state*] in your royal character.

103 *the balance*] the scales of justice.

109 *my proper son*] my own son.

115 *remembrance*] admonition.

And I will stoop and humble my intents 120  
 To your well-practised wise directions.  
 And, princes all, believe me, I beseech you ;  
 My father is gone wild into his grave,  
 For in his tomb lie my affections ;  
 And with his spirit sadly I survive,  
 To mock the expectation of the world,  
 To frustrate prophccies, and to raze out  
 Rotten opinion, who hath writ me down  
 After my seeming. The tide of blood in me  
 Hath proudly flow'd in vanity till now : 130  
 Now doth it turn and ebb back to the sea,  
 Where it shall mingle with the state of floods,  
 And flow henceforth in formal majesty.  
 Now call we our high court of parliament :  
 And let us choose such limbs of noble counsel,  
 That the great body of our state may go  
 In equal rank with the best govern'd nation ;  
 That war, or peace, or both at once, may be  
 As things acquainted and familiar to us ;  
 In which you, father, shall have foremost hand. 140  
 Our coronation done, we will accite,

123 *is gone wild into his grave*] has gone to his grave carrying my wild disposition there with him. Cf. *Hen. V*, I, i, 25-27, where it is said of Henry V, "The breath no sooner left his father's body, But that his *wildness*, mortified in him, seemed to die too."

124 *affections*] a kind of quibbling is implied here; affections meaning not only affectionate love but also "wild passions." Cf. *IV*, iv, 65, *supra*.

125 *And . . . survive*] And his serious spirit only survives in me.

128 *Rotten opinion*] False, untrustworthy public opinion.

132 *the state of floods*] the majestic dignity of the ocean.

141 *accite*] summon; cf. *II*, ii, 56, *supra*.

As I before remember'd, all our state:  
 And, God consigning to my good intents,  
 No prince nor peer shall have just cause to say,  
 God shorten Harry's happy life one day! [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE III — GLOUCESTERSHIRE

## SHALLOW'S ORCHARD

*Enter FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, SILENCE, DAVY, BARDOLPH, and the Page*

SHAL. Nay, you shall see my orchard, where, in an arbour, we will eat a last year's pippin of my own grafting, with a dish of caraways, and so forth: come, cousin Silence: and then to bed.

FAL. 'Fore God, you have here a goodly dwelling and a rich.

SHAL. Barren, barren, barren; beggars all, beggars all, Sir John: marry, good air. Spread, Davy; spread, Davy: well said, Davy.

FAL. This Davy serves you for good uses; he is your 10 serving-man and your husband.

SHAL. A good varlet, a good varlet, a very good varlet, Sir John: by the mass, I have drunk too much sack at supper: a good varlet. Now sit down, now sit down: come, cousin.

143 *consigning to . . . intents*] conforming with my good intentions.

3 *caraways*] sweetmeats, of which caraway seeds were an important ingredient.

9 *well said*] well done.

11 *husband*] Thus the Quarto and the first two Folios. The Third and Fourth Folios substitute the more ordinary form *husbandman*.

SIL. Ah, sirrah! quoth-a, we shall

Do nothing but eat, and make good cheer, [*Singing.*  
And praise God for the merry year;  
When flesh is cheap and females dear,  
And lusty lads roam here and there  
So merrily,  
And ever among so merrily.

20

FAL. There's a merry heart! Good Master Silence,  
I'll give you a health for that anon.

SHAL. Give Master Bardolph some wine, Davy.

DAVY. Sweet sir, sit; I'll be with you anon; most  
sweet sir, sit. Master page, good master page, sit.  
Proface! What you want in meat, we'll have in drink:  
but you must bear; the heart's all. [*Exit.*

SHAL. Be merry, Master Bardolph; and, my little  
soldier there, be merry.

SIL. Be merry, be merry, my wife has all: [*Singing.*  
For women are shrews, both short and tall:  
'Tis merry in hall when beards wag all,  
And welcome merry Shrove-tide.  
Be merry, be merry.

22 *ever among*] here and there, in and out; an expression of great  
ambiguity.

28 *Proface*!] Much good may it do you! An invitation to drink, used  
in much the same way as "Prosit" in Germany. It comes  
through the old French "prouface" or the Italian "profaccia"  
from the Latin "proficiat."

29 *you must bear; the heart's all*] you must excuse the entertainment;  
the good intention is everything.

34 *'Tis merry in hall when beards wag all*] This line often figures as a  
proverb in contemporary literature before the date of this play,  
and seems to have been the burden of a popular song. To "wag  
beards" is "to talk."

FAL. I did not think Master Silence had been a man of this mettle.

SIL. Who, I? I have been merry twice and once ere now.

40

*Re-enter DAVY*

DAVY. There's a dish of leather-coats for you.

*[To Bardolph.]*

SHAL. Davy!

DAVY. Your worship! I'll be with you straight *[to Bardolph]*. A cup of wine, sir?

SIL. A cup of wine that's brisk and fine, *[Singing.]*  
And drink unto the leman mine;  
And a merry heart lives long-a.

FAL. Well said, Master Silence.

SIL. An we shall be merry, now comes in the sweet o' the night.

50

FAL. Health and long life to you, Master Silence.

SIL. Fill the cup, and let it come; *[Singing.]*  
I'll pledge you a mile to the bottom.

SHAL. Honest Bardolph, welcome: if thou wantest any thing, and wilt not call, beshrew thy heart. Welcome, my little tiny thief *[to the Page]*, and welcome indeed too. I'll drink to Master Bardolph, and to all the cavaleros about London.

DAVY. I hope to see London once ere I die.

41 *leather-coats*] a name for russet apples.

46 *leman*] sweetheart.

49-50 *the sweet o' the night*] Cf. II, iv, 354, *supra*, "*the sweetest morsel of the night*," and 2 *Hen. VI*, I, iv, 16, "*the silent of the night*."

57 *cavaleros*] blades or bucks.

BARD. An I might see you there, Davy, —

60

SHAL. By the mass, you'll crack a quart together, ha! will you not, Master Bardolph?

BARD. Yea, sir, in a pottle-pot.

SHAL. By God's liggens, I thank thee: the knave will stick by thee, I can assure thee that. A' will not out; he is true bred.

BARD. And I'll stick by him, sir.

SHAL. Why, there spoke a king. Lack nothing: be merry. [*Knocking within.*] Look who's at door there, ho! who knocks? [*Exit Davy.* 70

FAL. Why, now you have done me right.

[*To Silence, seeing him take off a bumper.*

SIL.

Do me right,

[*Singing.*

And dub me knight:

Samingo.

Is 't not so?

63 *pottle-pot*] a pot holding two quarts.

65 *A' will not out*] He will not shirk, fail; an expression used of well-bred hounds.

71 *done me right*] "To do a man right" was a toper's phrase for drinking his health in a bumper.

72-74 *Do ne right . . . Samingo*] A fuller version of this popular song is in Nashe's *Summers Last Will and Testament* (1600); it there begins: "Mounsieur Mingo for quaffing doth surpass," and it ends, "God Bacchus doe mee right, And dubbe mee knight Domingo." The music of the English song was by Orlando Lassus, who originally wrote it for a French song. "Samingo," which in Shakespeare's text takes the place of Nashe's "Domingo" (*i. e.*, St. Dominic, a reputed patron-saint of topers), is apparently a corruption of San Domingo. Seeing, however, that the song celebrates the potations of "Mounsieur Mingo" and invites the honour of knighthood, "Sir Mingo" might well be substituted here for "Samingo."



## THE SECOND PART OF      ACT V

---

FAL. 'T is so.

SIL. Is 't so? Why then, say an old man can do somewhat.

*Re-enter DAVY*

DAVY. An 't please your worship, there's one Pistol come from the court with news. 80

FAL. From the court! let him come in.

*Enter PISTOL*

How now, Pistol!

PIST. Sir John, God save you!

FAL. What wind blew you hither, Pistol?

PIST. Not the ill wind which blows no man to good. Sweet knight, thou art now one of the greatest men in this realm.

SIL. By 'r lady, I think a' be, but goodman Puff of Barson.

PIST. Puff! 90

Puff in thy teeth, most recreant coward base!

Sir John, I am thy Pistol and thy friend,

And helter-skelter have I rode to thee,

And tidings do I bring and lucky joys

And golden times and happy news of price.

FAL. I pray thee now, deliver them like a man of this world.

PIST. A foutre for the world and worldlings base!  
I speak of Africa and golden joys.

88-89 *but goodman Puff of Barson*] excepting, or save, goodman Puff of Barston (the name of a village in Warwickshire).

98 *A foutre*] A coarse expression of scorn. Cf. line 114, *infra*.

FAL. O base Assyrian knight, what is thy news? 100  
Let King Cophetua know the truth thereof.

SIL. And Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John. [Singing.

PIST. Shall dunghill curs confront the Helicons?  
And shall good news be baffled?

Then, Pistol, lay thy head in Furies' lap.

SHAL. Honest gentleman, I know not your breeding.

PIST. Why then, lament therefore.

SHAL. Give me pardon, sir: if, sir, you come with  
news from the court, I take it there's but two ways,  
either to utter them, or to conceal them. I am, sir,  
under the king, in some authority. 111

PIST. Under which king, Besonian? speak, or die.

SHAL. Under King Harry.

PIST. Harry the fourth? or fifth?

SHAL. Harry the fourth.

101 *King Cophetua*] An allusion to the familiar ballad of "King Cophetua and the Beggar maid." See *L. L. L.*, IV, i, 64, and *Rich.* II, V, iii, 80.

102 *And Robin Hood . . . John*] a scrap from the ballad of "Robin Hood and the Pinder of Wakefield."

103 *the Helicons*] the Muses. A characteristically slovenly allusion to the mountain which, according to Greek mythology, was the special haunt of the Muses. Pistol bombastically claims the honour due to a servant of the Muses.

104 *baffled*] treated with ignominy.

105 *Furies'*] Cf. V, v, 37, *infra*, and note.

106 *I know not your breeding*] I don't understand your bringing up. I cannot make out the sort of man you are.

112 *Besonian*] A cant term for beggar. See note on *2 Hen. VI*, IV, i, 134.

PIST. A foutre for thine office!  
Sir John, thy tender lambkin now is king;  
Harry the fifth's the man. I speak the truth:  
When Pistol lies, do this; and fig me, like  
The bragging Spaniard.

FAL. What, is the old king dead?

PIST. As nail in door: the things I speak are just. 120

FAL. Away, Bardolph! saddle my horse. Master  
Robert Shallow, choose what office thou wilt in the  
land, 't is thine. Pistol, I will double-charge thee with  
dignities.

BARD. O joyful day!  
I would not take a knighthood for my fortune.

PIST. What! I do bring good news.

FAL. Carry Master Silence to bed. Master Shallow,  
my Lord Shallow, — be what thou wilt; I am fortune's  
steward — get on thy boots: we'll ride all night. O  
sweet Pistol! Away, Bardolph! [*Exit Bard.*] Come, Pis-  
tol, utter more to me; and withal devise something to  
do thyself good. Boot, boot, Master Shallow! I know  
the young king is sick for me. Let us take any man's  
horses; the laws of England are at my commandment.  
Blessed are they that have been my friends; and woe  
to my lord chief justice! 137

PIST. Let vultures vile seize on his lungs also!

---

114 *A foutre*] Cf. line 98, *supra*.

117-118 *fig me, like . . . Spaniard*] "To fig" was to use an insulting  
gesture, by putting the thumb between the fore and middle finger.  
It was reckoned of Spanish origin.

120 *As nail in door*] As dead as a door-nail.

133 *Boot, boot*] On with your boots!

“Where is the life that late I led?” say they:  
Why, here it is; welcome these pleasant days! [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE IV—LONDON

## A STREET

*Enter Beadles, dragging in* HOSTESS QUICKLY *and*  
DOLL TEARSHEET

HOST. No, thou arrant knave; I would to God that I might die, that I might have thee hanged: thou hast drawn my shoulder out of joint.

FIRST BEAD. The constables have delivered her over to me; and she shall have whipping-cheer enough, I warrant her: there hath been a man or two lately killed about her.

DOL. Nut-hook, nut-hook, you lie. Come on; I'll tell thee what, thou damned tripe-visaged rascal, an the child I now go with do miscarry, thou wert better thou 10 hadst struck thy mother, thou paper-faced villain.

HOST. O the Lord, that Sir John were come! he

139 *Where is the life . . . led*] This song is quoted by Petruchio in *T. of Shrew*, IV, i, 124.

(stage direction) *Enter Beadles*]. Thus the Folios with very slight variation. The Quarto reads: “Enter Sinklo and three or foure officers.” Sinklo, the name of the actor who played the First Beadle, found its way into the theatrical copy of the piece from which the Quarto was printed. The same actor is similarly mentioned in *T. of Shrew*, *Induction*.

5 *whipping-cheer*] whipping fare, plenty of whipping.

8 *nut-hook*] a cant name for a bailiff or constable. Cf. *M. Wives*, I, i,

would make this a bloody day to somebody. But I pray God the fruit of her womb miscarry !

FIRST BEAD. If it do, you shall have a dozen of cushions again; you have but eleven now. Come, I charge you both go with me; for the man is dead that you and Pistol beat amongst you.

DOL. I'll tell you what, you thin man in a censer, I will have you as soundly swung for this, — you blue-<sup>20</sup> bottle rogue, you filthy famished correctioner, if you be not swung, I'll forswear half-kirtles.

FIRST BEAD. Come, come, you she knight-errant, come.

HOST. O God, that right should thus overcome might ! Well, of sufferance comes ease.

DOL. Come, you rogue, come; bring me to a justice.

HOST. Ay, come, you starved blood-hound.

DOL. Goodman death, goodman bones !

HOST. Thou atomy, thou !

DOL. Come, you thin thing; come, you rascal. <sup>30</sup>

FIRST BEAD. Very well. [Exeunt.]

19 *you thin man in a censer*] A censer or fire pan for burning perfumes usually had a small figure of a man embossed on the pierced cover.

20-21 *blue-bottle rogue*] a reference to the blue uniform of beadles.

22 *half-kirtles*] short petticoats or aprons.

25 *of sufferance comes ease*] after suffering comes quiet.

29 *atomy*] anatomy, skeleton.

SCENE V — A PUBLIC PLACE NEAR WESTMINSTER  
ABBEY

*Enter two Grooms, strewing rushes*

FIRST GROOM. More rushes, more rushes.

SEC. GROOM. The trumpets have sounded twice.

FIRST GROOM. 'T will be two o'clock ere they come  
from the coronation: dispatch, dispatch. *[Exeunt.]*

*Enter FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, PISTOL, BARDOLPH, and Page*

FAL. Stand here by me, Master Robert Shallow; I  
will make the king do you grace: I will leer upon him  
as a' comes by; and do but mark the countenance that  
he will give me.

PIST. God bless thy lungs, good knight.

FAL. Come here, Pistol; stand behind me. O, if I <sup>10</sup>  
had had time to have made new liveries, I would have  
bestowed the thousand pound I borrowed of you. But  
't is no matter; this poor show doth better: this doth  
infer the zeal I had to see him.

SHAL. It doth so.

FAL. It shows my earnestness of affection, —

SHAL. It doth so.

FAL. My devotion, —

SHAL. It doth, it doth, it doth.

1 *More rushes*] Rushes were invariably strewn on ceremonial occasions  
both on the floors of houses and about the streets.

15, 17, 19 *It doth so . . . it doth*] These three remarks are assigned in  
the Quarto to Pistol. The Folio transfers the first only to Shallow.  
But it is clear that all belong to him.

FAL. As it were, to ride day and night; and not to<sup>20</sup> deliberate, not to remember, not to have patience to shift me, —

SHAL. It is best, certain.

FAL. But to stand stained with travel, and sweating with desire to see him; thinking of nothing else, putting all affairs else in oblivion, as if there were nothing else to be done but to see him.

PIST. 'Tis "semper idem," for "obsque hoc nihil est:" 't is all in every part.

SHAL. 'T is so, indeed.

30

PIST. My knight, I will inflame thy noble liver,  
And make thee rage.

Thy Doll, and Helen of thy noble thoughts,  
Is in base durance and contagious prison;  
Haled thither

By most mechanical and dirty hand:  
Rouse up revenge from ebon den with fell Alecto's snake,  
For Doll is in. Pistol speaks nought but truth.

FAL. I will deliver her.

[*Shouts within, and the trumpets sound.*]

28 "*semper idem*" . . . "*obsque hoc nihil est*" ] always the same . . .  
without this there is nothing.

29 '*t is all in every part*] a free rendering of an old English proverb,  
"All in all, and all in every part," signifying complete identity.

37 *Rouse up revenge*] A parody of the ghost's reiterated cry in Kyd's  
*Spanish Tragedy*, III, xv, 7, 9, 12, 16, 28, "*Awake revenge.*"

*Alecto's snake*] Alecto was one of the three Furies, who is described  
as crowned with snakes in Virgil's *Aeneid*, vii, 346. Cf. *Ant. and*  
*Cleop.*, II, v, 40: "like a Fury crown'd with *snakes*." Pistol  
has already mentioned the Furies' lap, V, iii, 105, *supra*.

38 *Doll is in*] *sc. gaol*.

PIST. There roar'd the sea, and trumpet-clangor  
sounds.

40

*Enter the KING and his train, the LORD CHIEF JUSTICE among them*

FAL. God save thy grace, King Hal! my royal Hal!

PIST. The heavens thee guard and keep, most royal  
imp of fame!

FAL. God save thee, my sweet boy!

KING. My lord chief justice, speak to that vain man.

CH. JUST. Have you your wits? know you what 't is  
you speak?

FAL. My king! my Jove! I speak to thee, my heart!

KING. I know thee not, old man: fall to thy prayers;  
How ill white hairs become a fool and jester!

I have long dream'd of such a kind of man,

50

So surfeit-swelled, so old, and so profane;

But, being awaked, I do despise my dream.

Make less thy body hence, and more thy grace;

Leave gormandizing; know the grave doth gape  
For thee thrice wider than for other men.

Reply not to me with a fool-born jest:

Presume not that I am the thing I was;

For God doth know, so shall the world perceive,

That I have turn'd away my former self;

So will I those that kept me company.

60

When thou dost hear I am as I have been,

Approach me, and thou shalt be as thou wast,

The tutor and the feeder of my riots:

Till then, I banish thee, on pain of death,

43 *imp*] scion.

45 *vain man*] foolish man.



As I have done the rest of my misleaders,  
Not to come near our person by ten mile.  
For competence of life I will allow you,  
That lack of means enforce you not to evil:  
And, as we hear you do reform yourselves,  
We will, according to your strengths and qualities, 70  
Give you advancement. Be it your charge, my lord,  
To see perform'd the tenour of our word.  
Set on. [Exeunt King, &c.]

FAL. Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pound.

SHAL. Yea, marry, Sir John; which I beseech you to  
let me have home with me.

FAL. That can hardly be, Master Shallow. Do not  
you grieve at this; I shall be sent for in private to  
him: look you, he must seem thus to the world: fear  
not your advancements; I will be the man yet that 80  
shall make you great.

SHAL. I cannot well perceive how unless you should  
give me your doublet, and stuff me out with straw. I  
beseech you, good Sir John, let me have five hundred of  
my thousand.

FAL. Sir, I will be as good as my word: this that  
you heard was but a colour.

SHAL. A colour that I fear you will die in, Sir John.

FAL. Fear no colours, go with me to dinner: come,  
Lieutenant Pistol; come, Bardolph: I shall be sent for 90  
soon at night.

87 *but a colour*] only a pretext, blind, make-believe.

89 *Fear no colours*] Fear nothing: a proverbial expression. Cf. *Tw.*

*Night*, I, v, 9.

91 *soon at night*] as soon as it is night.

*Re-enter PRINCE JOHN, and the LORD CHIEF JUSTICE;  
Officers with them*

CH. JUST. Go, carry Sir John Falstaff to the Fleet:  
Take all his company along with him.

FAL. My lord, my lord, —

CH. JUST. I cannot now speak: I will hear you soon.  
Take them away.

PIST. *Si fortuna me tormenta, spero contenta.*

*[Exeunt all but Prince John and the Chief Justice.]*

LAN. I like this fair proceeding of the king's:  
He hath intent his wonted followers  
Shall be all very well provided for; 100  
But all are banish'd till their conversations  
Appear more wise and modest to the world.

CH. JUST. And so they are.

LAN. The king hath call'd his parliament, my lord.

CH. JUST. He hath.

LAN. I will lay odds that, ere this year expire,  
We bear our civil swords and native fire  
As far as France: I heard a bird so sing,  
Whose music, to my thinking, pleased the king.  
Come, will you hence? *[Exeunt.]* 110

92 *the Fleet*] one of the chief prisons in the centre of London.

97 *Si fortuna . . . contenta*] Falstaff has already quoted this Italian proverb. See II, iv, 171, *supra*, and note.

101 *conversations*] manners, modes of life.

108 *I heard a bird so sing*] a familiar reference to the proverbially prophetic powers of the "little bird."

## EPILOGUE

*Spoken by a Dancer*

First my fear; then my courtesy; last my speech. My fear is, your displeasure; my courtesy, my duty; and my speech, to beg your pardons. If you look for a good speech now, you undo me: for what I have to say is of mine own making; and what indeed I should say will, I doubt, prove mine own marring. But to the purpose, and so to the venture. Be it known to you, as it is very well, I was lately here in the end of a displeasing play, to pray your patience for it and to promise you a better. I meant indeed to pay you with this; 10 which, if like an ill venture it come unluckily home, I break, and you, my gentle creditors, lose. Here I promised you I would be, and here I commit my body to your mercies: bate me some, and I will pay you some, and, as most debtors do, promise you infinitely.

If my tongue cannot entreat you to acquit me, will you command me to use my legs? and yet that were but light payment, to dance out of your debt. But a good conscience will make any possible satisfaction, and so would I. All the gentlewomen here have forgiven me: 20

---

(stage direction) *Spoken by a Dancer*] These words were added by Pope.

6 *I doubt*] I fear.

12 *I break*] I become bankrupt.

15 *infinitely*] The Quarto here inserts the words, *and so I kneele downe before you; but indeed, to pray for the Queene*, which the Folio places at the end of the epilogue.

if the gentlemen will not, then the gentlemen do not agree with the gentlewomen, which was never seen before in such an assembly.

One word more, I beseech you. If you be not too much cloyed with fat meat, our humble author will continue the story, with Sir John in it, and make you merry with fair Katharine of France: where, for any thing I know, Falstaff shall die of a sweat, unless already a' be killed with your hard opinions; for Oldcastle died a martyr, and this is not the man. My tongue is weary; 30 when my legs are too, I will bid you good night: and so kneel down before you; but, indeed, to pray for the queen.

25-26 *our humble author . . . with Sir John in it*] This promise was not fulfilled in the sequel to this play, *Henry V*, from which Falstaff is excluded. But Falstaff plays an important part in *M. Wives*, though hardly one that accords with the expressions used in this place.

28 *Falstaff shall die of a sweat*] an allusion either to the sweating sickness or to venereal disease. Cf. *Meas. for Meas.*, I, ii, 79, and III, ii, 53.

29-30 *Oldcastle died a martyr . . . man*] In his first draft of the piece Shakespeare bestowed on his fat humourist the name of Sir John Oldcastle, the Lollard leader, who was executed in 1417. In deference to protests, Shakespeare changed the name before the piece was printed to Falstaff, and here, somewhat lightly, calls attention to the alteration. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, ii, 40; and I, ii, 114, and III, ii, 24-25, *supra*, and notes.

32-33 *pray for the queen*] It was the custom on the Elizabethan stage for the actors at the end of a performance to kneel down and recite a prayer for the queen.



